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# THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

by SIGMUND SPAETH

author of AT HOME WITH MUSIC, etc.

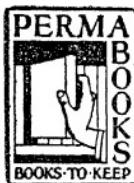
**What to listen to and what to listen for. A practical approach  
to the intelligent appreciation of music of permanent appeal.**





*The Art  
of  
Enjoying Music*

SIGMUND SPAETH



*PermaBooks*

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# Preface

Some time ago the author wrote a book also entitled *The Art of Enjoying Music* and supplied it with an extended Preface, aiming chiefly to justify its creation and explaining at some length the difficulties inherent in the task. Today such a Preface no longer seems necessary. It has been amply proved that there is a vast public honestly anxious to know more about music in general and to find some basis for developing and perhaps analyzing a sincere taste for what may be considered the permanent masterpieces of composition.

Nor does one have to argue any more over the possibility of approaching music as a whole, from the standpoint of normal human reaction, without worrying too much about historical background, biographical details or technical terms. This also has been proved eminently practical and is now actually a habit with those who have been discovering good music for themselves, largely by way of radio, records, and the motion

picture screen. The huge audience thus built up with the aid of modern science has become literally "at home with music," as implied by the title of a more recent book by the same author.

This little volume contains the essentials of its predecessor (which ran through many editions before going out of print), but is in effect a new book, perhaps even wider in its appeal because of the obviously necessary limitation of its materials. In spite of its modest size, it represents the author's biggest attempt to reach all the people who today enjoy good music, without in most cases knowing why it affects them as it does.

Some of the original Preface to *The Art of Enjoying Music* may be worth repeating here. It was noted then that "most people, and particularly musicians, take music too hard. They put it on such a high pedestal that they never actually get close to it." This may be less true today, but it still represents a handicap to general enjoyment, resulting in the inferiority complex that has in the past kept so many potential enthusiasts outside the group of self-advertised music-lovers. The wish that "people would have the

courage to say what they really think about music and not be so eternally worried over what somebody else may think and say" still holds good. But there is now far less reason to emphasize the snobbery and hypocrisy and intolerance that so long held back our musical development, as listeners as well as creators and interpreters.

Unquestionably valid is the statement that "repeated hearing of the best music is the surest path to good musical taste, and even after such a taste has been formed, in accordance with traditional values, the most important question is still 'Do you like this piece?' and perhaps the next is 'Why?'" It was to answer that everlasting "Why" that *The Art of Enjoying Music* was originally written, and the persistence of the question more than justifies this new version.

The original edition was widely used as a textbook for so-called "appreciation" classes in schools and colleges, and it should be even more helpful to teachers in its present compact form. While not primarily an "educational" work, the book is easily adaptable to the classroom and can be made to fit a course of any length or importance, demanding only some initiative and

imagination on the part of the instructor, who should be a musical enthusiast but not necessarily a trained musician. The list of compositions given in the course of each chapter will suggest the best material for listening, and all of this music is available on good records.

For the general reader a similar approach may be recommended. While there are no detailed analyses of individual compositions (as in some of the other books by this author), traditional standards and ideals are sufficiently indicated, and these should be tested whenever possible by the actual process of listening to the music itself. So far as time and inclination may permit, the reader or student is advised merely to hear more music of all kinds and to hear each individual piece as often as possible. In the words of the original Preface, "That in any case seems the best basis for developing the art of enjoying music."

SIGMUND SPAETH

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## *Contents*

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| PREFACE                   | iii |
| I INTRODUCTORY            | 1   |
| II OF TIME AND THE RHYTHM | 19  |
| III THE THEME IS MELODY   | 35  |
| IV HOW TO FIND HARMONY    | 49  |
| V TONE COLOR IS QUALITY   | 65  |
| VI A MATTER OF FORM       | 95  |
| VII MUSIC WITH A PROGRAM  | 115 |
| VIII FOLK- AND ART-SONG   | 135 |
| IX OPERA AND ORATORIO     | 159 |
| X ORCHESTRAL MUSIC        | 179 |
| XI CHAMBER MUSIC          | 191 |
| XII VARIOUS CONCLUSIONS   | 219 |
| INDEX                     | 232 |

*Books by Sigmund Spaeth*

THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC  
THE COMMON SENSE OF MUSIC  
STORIES BEHIND THE WORLD'S GREAT MUSIC  
MUSIC FOR FUN  
GREAT SYMPHONIES  
AT HOME WITH MUSIC  
A GUIDE TO GREAT ORCHESTRAL MUSIC  
READ 'EM AND WEEP:  
*The Songs You Forgot to Remember*  
BARBER SHOP BALLADS  
MUSIC FOR EVERYBODY  
A HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC IN AMERICA

## I. INTRODUCTORY

Practically everybody enjoys some sort of music in some way. This has nothing to do with "appreciation," whatever that may mean, and certainly does not imply either knowledge or understanding.

We are quite aware of the enjoyment of a good meal, yet we may be entirely ignorant of how it was prepared and comparatively unappreciative of its technical virtues. The connoisseur, the epicure, the gourmet turns the possibly sordid practice of eating into an art. Similarly anyone listening to music may develop an art of enjoyment which can become in time almost as significant as that of the composer or the interpreting

## 2 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

artist. For the efforts of the creator and the interpreter of music are wasted if there is no listener to enjoy the result, just as the gorgeous colors of a sunset actually do not exist except in the delighted eyes of the human spectator.

The enjoyment of music is an instinct, practically as common as the enjoyment of food, at least in the animal known as man. The “common sense of music” is literally a feeling shared normally by all human beings, and this common sense can be developed into an actual art of enjoyment through the simple process of listening.

Most people have been satisfied with their instinctive response to music, making no effort to find out why a certain rhythm or melody or harmony exerts a particular appeal. They are like the average man who eats mechanically, with definite satisfaction, often distinct pleasure, yet without any attempt to analyze the appeal of the food set before him.

There are even some established music-lovers who go to concerts and sit in a comfortable coma,

a luscious lethargy, coming out of it from time to time to applaud politely, but actually not listening to the music at all. With all their concert experience, they have not yet discovered just what to listen *for*.

So far as the art of enjoyment is concerned, there is a great similarity between music and sports. Practically anyone can get an honest thrill out of a long run in a football game, a homer or a sensational catch on the baseball diamond, an overhead smash on the tennis court, or a long drive straight down the fairway of the golf links. Similarly most people respond to the high note of a tenor or soprano, a dazzling bit of coloratura technique or a brilliant passage on the piano or violin.

But the connoisseurs of baseball, football, golf and tennis enjoy a special pleasure of which the average spectator is entirely unaware. They actually have more fun than the players themselves, for they get every thrill of achievement vicariously, make every hairline decision and

## 4 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

share every detail of technical finesse. Theirs is definitely an art of enjoying sports, quite apart from any possible participation.

Thus the music-lover can also make an art of listening, regardless of personal skill or training, sharing every detail of a performance, instead of responding only to an obvious beauty of tone or brilliance of technique. He asks not merely "Is this performer playing or singing in tune and with a satisfactory quality of tone?" but "Has this performance properly reflected the composer's intentions as to tempo, expression, musicianship and spiritual values?" "Is this a creative interpretation, worthy of a creative listener, or am I hearing only a correct repetition of the notes set down by the composer?"

The beauty of enjoying music is that it can begin at any point, regardless of previous experience, knowledge or understanding. The instinctive reaction is enough for a start, as with the enjoyment of a good meal or an exciting athletic event. Just where this spontaneous pleasure be-

gins to acquire the significance of art is comparatively unimportant. A first hearing of any piece of music should be unhampered by too much preparation. Let the composition exert the inevitable appeal of its inspiration before beginning to profit by subtler details of appreciation and understanding. At no time should there be any lack of true enjoyment; nor should there ever be any danger of satiety or boredom. What begins as an indefinable but unmistakable pleasure merely grows into an increasingly conscious aesthetic satisfaction.

To enjoy a piece of good music you do not have to know the life of its composer, nor the circumstances of its composition, nor its date, opus number, key signature or other technical details, even though such information may be definitely helpful, as with the baseball fan who knows the complete history of each of his heroes, with their batting and fielding averages for the season, and perhaps their entire career. There are certain fundamentals, however, which the

## 6 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

potential music-lover should grasp, and again the analogy of sport suggests the advisability of at least knowing the rules of the game, appreciating the significance of a hit, an error, an out and a run.

Anyone consciously forming good listening habits should develop some grasp of the outstanding forms and styles of music: vocal and instrumental, sacred and secular, classic, romantic and modern, "absolute" and "programmatic," along with the obvious categories of orchestral and chamber music, instrumental solos, folk song and "art song," opera, oratorio and ballet. But far more important at the outset is the approach to music as a whole, including both symphonies and swing, light as well as "grand" opera, analyzing universal truths and tendencies which may be revealed in a popular tune of the moment as clearly as in the immortal inspirations of the masters.

To facilitate such an unrestrained and uninhibited approach one should acquire the habit of

thinking of music as running in patterns, the same as carpets, lampshades or wallpaper. The patterns of music are constant and often present surprising parallels. Anyone at all can discover these patterns, again by the simple process of listening. Their discovery leads logically to the simplest and most comprehensive definition of music as *The Organization of Sound Toward Beauty.*

Sound without organization is mere noise. There is a law of physics to the effect that regular vibration creates a musical tone, while irregular vibration creates noise. This can be very simply demonstrated. If you strike a piece of tin with a hammer, you get a noise, because the vibrations are irregular, unorganized, hence unbeautiful. But if you strike a key on a piano, which in turn causes a hammer to strike a set of wires, you get a musical tone, because the "strings" are vibrating regularly. (The note A, to which a violinist or an orchestra tunes, represents 440 vibrations per second, according to "standard pitch.")

The organization of sound toward beauty therefore begins with simple vibration. When we hear a musical tone, we are actually hearing the regular vibration of air waves, caused by the vibration of some surface (like a drum-head) or string (as on a violin or piano) or tube (as in a trumpet or clarinet).

Music is made of Tones in Time. The "pitch" or height of a tone is determined by the rapidity of the vibrations that make it audible (the faster, the higher; the slower, the lower). Volume depends basically on the width of the vibrational swing, but is actually the result of amplification by resonators or electricity (as in radio). In a piano the resonator is the "sounding-board," made of wood, which is always a good amplifier. In a violin the resonance comes chiefly from the body of the instrument, also made of wood. For the human voice (whose vibrations are started by the tiny vocal cords) we get resonance through the nose, the lips, the palate and various cavities of the head and chest.

Finally a musical tone always has a definite quality or color (what the French call *timbre*) and this is governed by so-called "overtones," blending with the "fundamental" tone which determines the pitch. Overtones are not audible to the average ear, but the hearer is unconsciously aware of them in distinguishing between a stringed and a wind instrument, between a flute and a trumpet, or between masculine and feminine voices. The more the overtones are in evidence, the more obvious is the quality or color of the tone.

Think of music as a practically continuous stream of sound, constantly affected by pitch, volume, tone color and time. Without the important element of time, it is difficult to think of a regular melody, much less a complete composition.

Time, in its broadest sense, determines how fast the individual tones are played or sung, how long they are sustained, which one is accented and which unaccented, and what pauses or

## 10 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

“rests” come between them. Tones and time, therefore, are actually the entire material of music. The variation of pitch (higher or lower), in a sequence of tones, creates melody. The combination of tones of various pitches, sounding simultaneously, creates harmony (and sometimes discord, depending largely on the ear of the listener). The varieties and combinations of instrumental and vocal quality create tone color in the larger sense (as heard in an orchestra, a quartet or a chorus). The fundamental beats of time, plus the distribution of accents, create rhythm (a term often applied rather loosely to time itself). The patterns of time, tune, harmony and tone color, logically combined, create the *form* of a musical composition, which may also have a mathematical pattern of its own.

These are the organizing factors in practically every piece of music. They appear in that order historically and they are discovered in that order by human beings, children or adults, savages or civilized people. It is human nature to respond

first to rhythm (keeping time when the band goes by or the orchestra strikes up a good fox-trot). There is a sound theory that all folk-music began merely as a rhythmic accompaniment to manual labor, just as today the physical effort of marching, dancing or doing the "daily dozen" exercises is made easier and less tiring by a musical accompaniment in strict time.

After the physical reaction to time or rhythm comes the recognition of melody, the response to a logical progression of tones of different pitch. Here the factors of memory and association are important. It has been correctly stated that "popular music is familiar music," so the only real problem of making good music popular is to make it familiar. Recognition is the first step toward appreciation, and it is by its melody that music in general is most easily recognized.

After the largely instinctive response to rhythm and melody comes the somewhat subtler awareness of harmony and tone color, both coming late in the history of mankind's enjoyment

## 12 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

of music. Finally we arrive at the comparatively intellectual appreciation of form itself, recognizing the structure of a song or a symphonic movement, a Rondo or even a Fugue.

Every one of these organizing factors can be reduced to patterns of the simplest kind. There are patterns of rhythm, starting with the fundamental beats of march or waltz time; patterns of melody, often following the logical tones of the scale itself; patterns of harmony, developing from a simple chord to the intricacies of overlapping voices; patterns of tone color, represented by all the instrumental and vocal combinations from a male, mixed or string quartet to a symphony orchestra, possibly with full chorus added. Finally there are patterns of form, involving the succession or alternation of themes, their "development" or technical treatment, including variations and embellishments, and all the details of musicianship that go into a complete work of the serious type.

It is through such patterns that music can be

approached as a whole, regardless of its period, its background or its style. There are patterns in popular songs and folk-music as well as in symphonies and operas. They all fall under the comprehensive definition of music as "the organization of sound toward beauty."

If you strike a handful of piano keys at random, the result is not beautiful (except perhaps to a few ultra-modern ears). Even though each tone is in itself an example of organized vibration, the haphazard combination is not likely to give general pleasure. How, then, are these tones to be organized toward beauty? (It should be noted that the preposition is "toward," not "to." Anyone can work *in the direction of beauty*, as every sincere artist does, without necessarily expecting to *attain* it.)

The savage, hearing an unorganized handful of tones, would probably say, "All you need is rhythm—something to keep time to." (That applies to the modern as well as the ancient savage.) Your savage might be called a "foot-lis-

tener." He listens to music with his feet, which is all right as far as it goes (literally a step in the right direction). An Indian chief might get a perfectly good war-dance out of that handful of tones by simply sounding them rhythmically.

There is no disgrace in being a foot-listener. Rhythm is the simplest and most fundamental way of organizing sound toward beauty. It starts on the ground and presumably works upward. In time the foot-listener becomes a "heart-listener," responding emotionally as well as physically to music; and eventually he adds the necessary intellectual processes to become a "head-listener." The real music-lover combines all three, and the great composer invariably has this triple appeal, like a "triple threat" in football. Music is not merely for the intellect or pure reason. It appeals equally to the feet, the heart and the head, which means physically, emotionally, and intellectually; and the combination may truly be considered a spiritual reaction.

The raw material of music is Sound, which

must first be organized into musical tone by regular vibration and then toward beauty through the organizing factors of Rhythm, Melody, Harmony, Tone Color, and Form. The same approach, with similar definitions, may be applied to any of the other arts, merely changing the materials. A painter uses color as his raw material and a sculptor clay, marble or bronze. An architect uses stone, wood, and other building materials and a writer uses words. Behind the technical organization of all these materials lie the thoughts, moods and emotions of the artists, both creative and interpretive.

An artist is a person who succeeds in transferring his or her own thoughts, moods and emotions to other people. If beauty and truth are the same, as has been claimed, then an artist arrives at beauty by expressing his own feelings in such a way that others will recognize their truth.

Insincerity is generally easy to detect in art. But sincerity alone does not make an artist. There must also be the command of a medium of

expression that will inevitably transfer the feelings of the artist to others.

Anyone can have a thought, a mood or an emotion. Too often this universal human trait is confused with art itself. A child, pounding on the keys of a piano, may be sincerely expressing the joy of life, but unless it means something more than an atrocious noise to others, it can hardly be called art.

The artist must know how to organize the raw materials of his art in the direction of a beauty which will at least be generally recognizable, perhaps not immediately but certainly in time. If it is great art, it must pass the test of permanence. That is, over a period of years, a number of people must recognize it as beautiful or true, or both. A classic is a work of art that has achieved permanence, by fairly common consent. The term "permanent music" might well be substituted for the much abused "classical." Even when permanence is not yet established, the so-called "classical music" might better be called

“serious,” as compared with the frankly transient, ephemeral material of the “popular” type. Nevertheless, it must be realized that a “classic” may easily become far more popular than any current product of Tin Pan Alley. Conversely, a popular tune must be recognized as a classic if it has clearly passed the test of time, as in the case of Stephen Foster’s inspirations and perhaps some more recent examples of “popular music.”

In any case, the old distinction between “classical” and “popular” is rapidly disappearing. Serious music has become steadily more popular, while the standards of our popular music are becoming constantly higher. The dividing line is becoming less and less distinct and may eventually be eliminated altogether. (In this connection the author’s *History of Popular Music in America* may be worth consulting.)

The following chapters will point out the ways in which the organizing factors of rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color and form affect great

## 18 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

music (and some not so great), with some discussion also of the individual manifestations of talent, and occasionally genius, that give life and zest to the most fascinating of all the arts.

## II. OF TIME AND THE RHYTHM

The word "time" has several meanings in relation to music. In its broadest sense it covers everything connected with the beat or pulse that underlies every sequence of notes: the duration of each tone, the division of notes into groups, individual accents, etc. Specifically, however, it may apply to the number of beats in a measure (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, even 7, 9, or 12) and to the fractional values of each of those beats (usually quarters or eighths and sometimes half-notes). In that sense one speaks of "four-four" time (often called "common time" because it is just that), or "two-four" time (which is the same thing cut in half), or "three-four" or "three-quarter" time,

“six-eight,” etc. Instead of the fractional figures, a more general term may be used such as “march time” or “waltz time.” Finally there is a very common use of the word “time” corresponding to the Italian “tempo” (which has become practically an English word) and referring merely to the speed at which the music is played.

Few people make any real distinction between “time” and “rhythm,” yet there is actually a definite difference. While “rhythm” may apply to the fundamental beat of a march or a waltz, it properly refers to the time values of the notes themselves, their accents and their grouping in logical “phrases.” A dancer with a sense of rhythm does far more than merely keep time. There is a feeling for the entire phrase in relation to the fundamental beat, a broad sense of rhythmic significance untrammeled by the mere counting of twos and threes. A pattern of time may be nothing more than the basic beat of two, three or four to a measure, whereas a pattern of rhythm may extend over a considerable number

of successive notes, determined by their length, accents and grouping.

It is impossible to play or hear any musically significant group of tones without certain definite accents, just as it is impossible to think of any intelligible sentence that does not emphasize certain words and syllables more than others. Metrical poetry insists on a regular beat, with the accents coming at definite intervals, and practically all music does the same thing.

Even prose has its accents, although not so marked or regular as those of poetry, and some examples of prose can be credited with a fairly definite rhythm. (There are some passages in music, generally called "recitative," and quite common in opera and oratorio, which correspond to prose, as compared with the metrical character of most music. But even these have obvious accents, resulting from the necessary emphasis on certain syllables of the words themselves.)

The simplest way to grasp the significance of time in music is by direct comparison with

## 22 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

poetry. If you read any conventionally metrical line of verse, you can hardly help giving it the proper accents. For instance, in the opening lines of Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*, "Tell me not in mournful numbers Life is but an empty dream," there are eight definite accents, four to a line. The very character of the individual words and syllables determines these accents and permits no variation of the meter. If a musician were reading a corresponding line of melody, he would recognize the accents by the length of the notes and their position in a phrase or measure. (In music the first beat in a measure invariably carries the strongest accent.)

In poetry it is unnecessary to indicate accents because the human ear grasps them instinctively. In music, however, a system of notation is required, where every written or printed note clearly shows not only its pitch but also its duration in beats or the fraction of a beat. It is not difficult to learn to read notes, for the musical alphabet has only seven letters, A, B, C, D, E, F,

G, as compared to twenty-six in the English alphabet. There is a distinct satisfaction in being able to read a piece of music as one would read a magazine or a newspaper, but such technical knowledge is by no means necessary to the art of enjoying music. An illiterate person can understand and speak a language without being able to read it.

A listener without any knowledge of notation can easily acquire the habit of hearing the fundamental beat of time in any piece of music, just as dancers usually have no difficulty in deciding whether the music is a waltz or a fox-trot. The surprising fact is that *all* fundamental time-beats run in twos or threes or a combination of the two. Broadly speaking, the fundamental beat of all music is in either march or waltz time, but with an infinite variety of effects made possible by the different degrees of speed, as well as by artificial accents, "rests" and the complexity of rhythmic patterns distributed over the basic meter.

The commonest time-beats are 2-4, 3-4, and 4-4 (which is twice 2-4), with the quarter-note (represented by the figure 4) as the unit of measurement. So-called "compound time" (6-8, 9-8 and 12-8) always represents multiples of 2 and 3, while the supposedly irregular 5-4 time is merely the alternation of 2 and 3 quarters.

This regularity of the fundamental time-beat rests upon a universal law of nature. Its most familiar example is the beating of the human heart, which always runs in pairs, with one accented and the other unaccented. A clock ticks in the same way, and this is of course the mechanical demonstration of time itself. Animals, including human beings, breathe in a regular time-beat, particularly when asleep, the intake of breath corresponding to the accented beat. The act of walking or running is almost necessarily rhythmical, with its regularity of accent emphasized when marching to a musical accompaniment. (It is customary to mark the accent with the left foot.)

So music is really proving its universal truth when it insists upon a definite time-beat, and since this is its closest relation to Nature, it is logical that the time element should be the most primitive and the most widely recognized. Rhythm forms the skeleton of music and that skeleton acquires flesh and blood only when melody and harmony are added.

The first attempts of the savage to make music are nothing more than time-beats, and the same is true of a child. Rhythm is almost entirely a physical stimulus, and the response of the feet is practically a reflex action.

Test your sense of time by listening to marches and waltzes, in which the fundamental beat is strongly marked in twos and threes. (Your children will enjoy this also.) Try keeping time with your feet, or clapping your hands rhythmically, or even beating time with a stick. (There is lots of fun in pretending to be a conductor, letting the phonograph or radio supply the orchestra.)

Schubert's *Marche Militaire* and Sousa's *Stars*

## 26 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

*and Stripes Forever* are good pieces for a first acquaintance with march time. A slower and more stately music of the same type will be found in the *Priests' March* from Mendelssohn's *Athalia*, the *Coronation March* from Meyerbeer's *Prophet*, the *Triumphal March* from Verdi's *Aïda* and Elgar's familiar *Pomp and Circumstance*. Some marches are written in 6-8 time, but these actually have two beats to a measure, in a rather fast tempo. Good examples are the *Marche Lorraine*, Sousa's *Washington Post* and the well-known *Up the Street*. For waltzes with a well-marked beat in threes, try the *Beautiful Blue Danube* of Johann Strauss, Franz Lehar's *Merry Widow Waltz* and Victor Herbert's *Kiss Me Again*.

Such pieces as these represent the most obvious forms of duple and triple time. They are good self-starters toward the enjoyment of music, for adults and children alike. Once the fundamental beat of march and waltz time is almost automatically recognized, it is easy to branch out

into other compositions of similar or related rhythm.

Lovers of popular music will soon discover that the fox-trot is actually in march time (as were the one-step and two-step of the past). The old-fashioned Schottische was in 2-4 time and the Polka in 4-4. The Tango and Habañera are both in a slow 4-4 time (with a rhythmic skip to give them individuality) while the Rumba and other Latin-American dances all represent a duple beat at various degrees of speed. An ancient Spanish dance in slow triple time was the Sarabande, used effectively by Johann Sebastian Bach in some of his *Suites*. Other Spanish forms of triple time are the Bolero (immortalized by Ravel), Fandango, Jota, and Seguidilla (well represented in Bizet's *Carmen*).

The old-fashioned Minuet is in triple time, but slower than a waltz, and with all three beats equally accented. This is not literally true, for it is impossible to avoid a conscious or unconscious emphasis on the first beat of a measure.

But a true Minuet gives the effect of three equally important beats in each measure, and the dignified dance once performed to such music consistently carried out that idea.

Many composers, notably Haydn and Mozart, used the minuet as the third movement of a symphony, and it is a regular part also of the suites which came before the symphony and which were actually sets of dance-pieces. The best minuets for casual or permanent acquaintance are those of Mozart, particularly those from his symphonies in G minor and E-flat and the one from the opera *Don Giovanni*. Beethoven wrote a familiar *Minuet in G*, which is quite easy to play on the piano. (It was imitated by such popular songs as *When It's Apple Blossom Time in Normandy*, *Rose of No Man's Land* and *When the Lights Go On Again*.) Worth hearing also is the popular *Minuet* of Paderewski (President Truman's show-piece) as well as a real old-timer by Boccherini, which has a rather tricky, syncopated rhythm.

The Polish Mazurka, made famous by the piano music of Chopin, is also in triple time, but usually rather faster than a waltz and with an artificial accent on the *third* beat of each measure, which produces an almost unique effect. Any mazurka by Chopin is worth hearing; they are all beautiful music. Among the more familiar mazurkas one should include Ganne's *La Czarina*.

The Polonaise is another Polish dance in triple time, but quite slow and stately. It was much used for court processions (appearing thus in Moussorgsky's opera, *Boris Godounoff*) and may actually be considered a march in triple time. The best polonaise music is again that of Poland's greatest composer, Frederic Chopin, particularly the one called *Military* and the *Polonaise in A-flat* (sometimes known as *Heroic*) which became an American hit through the biographical motion picture, *A Song to Remember*, and the popular song, *Till the End of Time*. (Chopin wrote fifteen polonaises altogether, and there is

also a good one by the American composer, Edward MacDowell.)

An ancient dance in 4-4 time was the Gavotte, favored by early French composers as well as the great Bach. There are good modern examples in such operas as the *Mignon* of Ambroise Thomas and Massenet's *Manon*, plus a neat satire in Gilbert and Sullivan's delightful operetta, *The Gondoliers*.

There is a great difference between the fundamental beat of time (which always runs in twos or threes) and a true pattern of rhythm. The latter represents the grouping of notes, long and short, accented and unaccented, either in the melody or perhaps in a persistent figure of the accompaniment. In Ravel's *Bolero*, for instance, there is a fundamental beat of three to a measure, but each of these is decorated by shorter notes (played on the drum), with alternating effects of four and six on the third beat of each measure. Above this rhythmic pattern of the accompaniment lies that of the melody itself, which main-

tains a fairly monotonous figure, relieved only by the variety of instrumental color and the gradual increase in volume. This combination of tricky effects may be considered entirely responsible for the popularity of the composition as a whole.

Most rhythmic patterns are far simpler than this. They may actually be reduced to one note to a beat, as at the start of the round, *Frère Jacques* (*Are You Sleeping?*) or *Yankee Doodle*. The same effect appears in the old A-B-C tune (sometimes sung as “One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. All good children go to Heaven”), with the even pattern of one note to a beat interrupted by a longer note after every six beats. This pattern is exactly duplicated in the slow theme of Haydn’s *Surprise Symphony* (in which a sudden loud chord is the “surprise,” supposedly intended to wake up the audience or, in the words of the composer, “make the ladies scream”).

Actually the patterns of rhythm are often

## 32 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

identical, acting simply as molds into which the melody and harmony can be poured, thus achieving the necessary variety of effect. An amusing game can be played by tapping out the rhythm of a melody (or clapping the hands in the rhythmic pattern) and making others guess the tune that is implied. In such a game the patterns mentioned above would create considerable confusion.

If you tap out a pattern consisting of a long note followed by two short ones, you may have in mind the tune of *Long, Long Ago*, or one of several hymn tunes, or even the chief strain of Schubert's *Marche Militaire*. There is an ironic parallel in the opening rhythmic patterns of Chopin's *Funeral March* and the *Wedding March* from Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Both rest upon a fundamental beat of four to a measure (like most marches), but both start with an identical rhythmic pattern, illustrated by the irreverent words, "Here comes the bride, here comes the bride. See how she wobbles from side to side."

Dvorak's familiar *Humoresque* has a consistent skipping pattern, similar to that of *The Son of a Gambolier* (also known as *The Rambling Wreck from Georgia Tech*) and appearing likewise in the Finale of Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata*.

It is seldom that a rhythmic pattern runs all the way through a composition, but one can almost always find certain phrases whose rhythm builds the actual skeleton of the whole piece. The opening "motto" of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is actually the basis of the entire first movement, and the composer emphasized its importance as a rhythmic pattern by saying, "Thus Fate knocks at the door." (The three short notes followed by a long one are analogous to the telegraphic symbols for the letter V, which stood for Victory in the second World War.)

The fine melody that we know as *America* (originally *God Save the King*) shows a consistent pattern of rhythm which makes it very easy to sing. Mostly there are three notes in a

## 34 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

measure, alternating an even count of one to a beat with a skipping effect created by lengthening the first note and shortening the second. The phrases "of thee I sing," and "let freedom ring," both end with a single note covering three beats of time. This melody could easily be guessed from the tapping or clapping of its rhythmic pattern throughout. *The Star-spangled Banner* should not be any more difficult (it is the melodic range that really causes trouble), and there are many other famous tunes that can readily be identified by their patterns of rhythm alone.

### III. THE THEME IS MELODY

After discovering the fundamental beat or pulse of music (and almost instinctively keeping time to it), then becoming aware of the more elaborate patterns of rhythm on which the melody or accompaniment is strung, one easily progresses to the recognition of the melodic patterns themselves, which are determined by the intervals of pitch.

A common and by no means illogical question is "How many notes does it take to make a tune?" A possible answer would be "Two." For one of the oldest tunes in the world is that of the cuckoo-call, which has only two tones. The same two-tone pattern is represented by the familiar "come

hither" whistle of the human race, a common signal from childhood to the days of courting. The call of the quail or "Bob White" is also a two-tone melody, and both of these patterns appear frequently in man-made compositions.

The two notes of the cuckoo-call are prominent in such popular tunes of the past as *The Japanese Sandman*, *Carolina in the Morning* and Irving Berlin's *Pack Up Your Sins*. They are heard in the *Caisson Song* of the Field Artillery, in Beethoven's *Turkish March* and the Brahms *Lullaby* (in reverse order). An old piano piece by the French composer, Daquin, is called *The Cuckoo*, and the bird-call is deliberately imitated in Haydn's *Toy Symphony*, Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* and Humperdinck's operatic fairy-tale, *Hansel and Gretel*.

The commonest melodic pattern of *three tones* is found in the familiar bugle calls. Actually the bugler needs only three tones for all his effects, repeating them at various levels in the scale, often with only an octave needed to make a com-

plete melody. (The Trio of Sousa's March, *Semper Fidelis*, is made entirely of one of these bugle tunes.)

The start of our own *Star-spangled Banner* shows the bugle pattern going down over three tones and then up again to the octave (on the words, "Oh, say, can you see?") and these same three tones appear prominently in many another national and patriotic air. (An almost embarrassing parallel is found in the opening phrase of the German *Watch on the Rhine*, known at Yale as *Bright College Years*.) The three bugle tones are heard near the start of the old Russian (Czarist) anthem (also familiar as *Hail, Pennsylvania* and a hymn tune), as well as in the French *Marseillaise* (an octave higher). They open the *Blue Danube Waltz* of Johann Strauss and (in a different position or "inversion") *The Long, Long Trail*. George Cohan's *Over There* is deliberately built upon the bugle call, which appears also, almost automatically, in Berlin's *Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning*, as

well as *Alexander's Ragtime Band*. The great tune of *Dixie* starts on the three bugle notes (like *The Star-spangled Banner*), then runs up the scale and returns to the key-note, emphasizing the same three important tones on the way.

There are actual trumpet calls in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and its dramatic Overture, known as *Leonore No. 3*, as well as in Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Meistersinger* (the latter imitated in the old song, *Where Did You Get That Hat?*), and these melodic patterns have the same three tones as the bugle, adding the octave as needed.

A common three-tone pattern of melody may be found at the start of the scale, made familiar by another whistling slogan, "Over the Fence Is Out." Starting on the key-note, this pattern appears clearly in the old French *Au Clair de la Lune*, the round, *Frère Jacques* (already mentioned for its rhythmic pattern), and *Yankee Doodle*. Played downward (3,2,1 instead of 1,2,3) it produces *Three Blind Mice*, as well as Rousseau's *Lullaby* ("Go Tell Aunt Betsy") and

the start of Stephen Foster's *Old Folks at Home* (*Swanee River*). *Good-night, Ladies* begins with the three bugle notes and then goes into a three-tone scale pattern with "Merrily we roll along," also sung as "Mary had a little lamb."

For a good four-tone pattern of melody, listen to the famous Westminster Chime, played by Big Ben in London and on thousands of clock towers and grandfather's clocks all over the world. (Handel is generally credited with inventing this progression.) The four notes of this pattern appear prominently in the old waltz, *Three O'Clock in the Morning* (intentionally suggesting the chiming of the clock) and in *Say Au Revoir But Not Good-bye*, with another inversion for *Sweet Adeline*. But the commonest order is from the bottom up, as in *How Dry I Am!* (This is actually an old hymn tune called *O Happy Day!*) The same sequence of four notes may be found at the start of another hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light*, and still another, labelled *Berlin*, borrowed it from the slow movement of Beethoven's *Second Sym-*

*phony.* The old song, *Plaisir d'Amour*, begins the same way, as does a *Song without Words* by Mendelssohn. Franz Lehar used this four-tone pattern for the start of his *Merry Widow Waltz* and also for the tune, *Vilia*, in the same operetta.

The black keys of the piano run in groups of five ("three of a kind and a pair") forming one of the oldest patterns in all music, the pentatonic or five-tone scale. It is found in the folk-music of practically every country in the world, which may explain in part why so many people think it is easier to play on the black keys than on the white. (The little tune of *Peter Piper* has thus become familiar in many a home.)

The once popular fox-trot, *Stumbling*, showed this five-tone pattern three times in succession at the start, merely shifting the accent for each repetition. Berlin's *Always* put it into waltz time, with a cuckoo-call added (on the word "always"). Another popular tune beginning with the five-tone scale was the Chevalier favorite,

*Louise*, and more recently we have had *Allah's Holiday*, Maria Grever's *Magic Is the Moonlight* and Hoagy Carmichael's *Old Buttermilk Sky*.

The first five notes of the common ("diatonic") scale also make a good melody pattern, played up or down. They constitute the most familiar of piano exercises, giving each note to a different finger. Mozart used them effectively in his opera, *The Magic Flute*, for the little tune played by Papageno on his Pan-pipe, originally consisting of five reeds or pipes, fastened together. A popular tune called *I'm Yours* was founded on the same part of the scale.

With one note added, you get the six-tone pattern represented on two levels in the Hungarian folk-song, *The Heron*, which Liszt used in his *Hungarian Fantasy* and also one of the *Rhapsodies*. A seventh tone completes the diatonic scale, lettered from A to G, which is the entire musical alphabet. If you play seven white keys in a row, anywhere on the piano, you inevitably arrive at

the octave of the note on which you started. Playing both black and white keys, you get a total of twelve before again reaching the octave. These twelve notes, carried on through higher and lower octaves, are actually the entire materials of melody.

The complete scale has often been used as a melodic pattern, with an entertaining example in the old popular tune, *Ragging the Scale*. Handel's hymn-tune, *Joy to the World*, starts with a descending scale and follows the same general pattern throughout. A parallel scale effect was elaborated by Tschaikowsky in the Finale of his *Fourth Symphony*. (The main theme of that Finale is a Russian folk-tune, *The Birch Tree*, also representing a descending scale, but in minor key.) Handel's famous *Largo* (originally a tenor aria in his opera *Xerxes*) starts with descending scale tones, with a surprisingly close (and unquestionably accidental) parallel in the slow movement of Bach's concerto for two violins. The old tune of *Robin Adair* carries the

scale upward, a pattern duplicated in the modern college song, *Fordham Ram*.

When all twelve of the half-tones appear in the scale (representing the black and white keys of the piano), it is called "chromatic," instead of "diatonic," implying that it contains the entire gamut of musical colors, not merely the outstanding tones. The chromatic scale is also a common pattern of melody, with an attractive effect created by the closer spacing of the tones (only half a tone apart). Godard wrote a *Valse Chromatique*, which is really a study in chromatic melody, and the famous aria, *My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice*, in Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah*, is chiefly built on chromatic scale progressions. The melody patterns of Rimsky-Korsakoff's familiar *Song of India* are mostly chromatic, and this effect has been imitated in such popular tunes as *Beautiful Ohio*, the *Missouri Waltz* and *Carolina Moon*, as well as the Italian *Ciribiribin*.

Melody, as already suggested, is a logical pro-

## 44 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

gression of tones, at various levels of pitch. The only real question involved is as to what may fairly be called "logical." When a pattern of melody follows such established facts as the scale itself or the tones of the major chord, there can hardly be an argument as to its basic truth and beauty. Yet it is hard to explain why certain progressions should sound natural and others unnatural, and this may be largely a matter of habit. The human ear has become accustomed to the "tempered" scale, which was developed simply as a convenient arrangement of tones and half-tones, by no means scientifically accurate.

Unquestionably the average listener can become accustomed to more and more subtle and unusual melodic progressions, perhaps with increasing enjoyment and appreciation, but whether such development is potentially unlimited is again open to argument. Ultra-modern music seems to decree that any sequence of tones, no matter how ugly or fantastic, must be recognized as legitimate melody. Yet it is human nature to follow

the line of least resistance, and the most popular tunes are generally the most obvious. When such a tune passes the test of time, as in the case of true folk-music, which definitely represents the survival of the fittest, its creator should be given even more credit than for discovering a startlingly original pattern of melody. (Stephen Foster is again the best example of a composer who could achieve permanent beauty by the simplest means.)

Melody is the memory element in music. "By their tunes ye shall know them" is a good rule for acquiring familiarity with the classics. Recognition is the first step toward appreciation, which, in the best sense, means enjoyment. Any-one can at least recognize a tune, even within the traditional limits of President Grant, who said he knew only two tunes: "One was *Yankee Doodle* and the other was not." At least he had a starting-point, and his starting-point was a tune.

One may easily become just as familiar with a symphony or opera as with a popular song by

simply recognizing the tunes or patterns of melody. No great music is entirely devoid of melody. It may not be immediately apparent; in fact, the less obvious melodies are quite likely to prove the best and most clearly marked for permanence. The average popular tune has a comparatively short life. It cannot stand constant repetition and is soon discarded (only to be replaced by another of perhaps no greater value). A popular tune is almost necessarily the easiest to remember, but also generally the easiest to forget.

Tunes which linger in the memory are often aided by nostalgic association, without necessarily possessing any inherent beauty. The lullaby sung by a mother to her child remains a beautiful memory, even though it may have been a quite nonsensical ditty. College traditions impart to certain songs an almost supernatural power, just as the savage medicine man could persuade his fellows that certain rhythms or melodic phrases would produce a definite effect (*victory*)

in war, rain, a rich harvest or the healing of the sick). Similarly the ancient Greeks believed in the “ethical” qualities of music, arguing that only the Doric mode was worthy of leading men into battle, that another scale represented effemiancy and so on. In view of the effect of a *Marseillaise*, a *Dixie* or even a *Yankee Doodle* under certain conditions, one can hardly deny such traditions or dismiss them as mere superstitions. The power of melody is prodigious in stirring old memories, stimulating heroism, soothing the “savage breast” (or “beast”), renewing ties of love or friendship. It is unquestionably the most important factor in the organization of sound toward beauty.



## IV. HOW TO FIND HARMONY

Just as melody came out of rhythm, so harmony comes out of melody. If you play the melodic pattern of the opening notes of *The Star-spangled Banner*, as previously suggested, and then sound the tones together, the result is a perfect major chord. That chord is the commonest ending to a composition. When the interlocutor in a minstrel show says, "Gentlemen, be seated," that is the chord they sit down on. It is the logical conclusion.

Harmony is created whenever two or more tones are sounded together, producing a pleasing or satisfying or even interesting effect. The extremists of modern music insist that any tone can

be made to harmonize with any other tone, but this is by no means evident to the average ear. Again the question of habit arises, and it may possibly be argued that a listener can become accustomed to almost any discord or cacophony. Certainly the conventional chords may become tiresome to the ear, as they undoubtedly have to the modern composers. Even a barber shop quartet seeks a certain amount of variety in its harmonies.

The Greeks recognized only the octave, the fourth and the fifth as true harmonies, and these intervals actually rest upon a mathematical relationship of vibrations. (The octave above a musical tone has exactly twice as many vibrations per second as the tone itself. This ratio of two to one can easily be proved by stopping a string exactly half-way, to create a tone an octave above the open string, or comparing the tube of a piccolo with that of a flute, which is twice as long and therefore plays a whole octave lower.)

Technically the second and seventh intervals

of the scale are still considered discords when sounded with the key-note, but these combinations have become commonplace even in popular music, while the real modernist does not hesitate to harmonize in two keys only half a tone apart. In view of such liberties, it seems absurd to insist on any "laws" of harmony, and the materials of the old textbooks are now mostly ignored except in so far as they systematize the "spelling" and naming of chords for convenience.

The earliest harmony was really a combination of melodies. It was found that by singing or playing the same melody simultaneously at different levels of pitch, a new effect resulted. Later it was discovered that the sounds were pleasanter if two different melodies were placed one above the other, and this led gradually to the whole structure of "polyphonic" or many-voiced music.

The principle can be very simply illustrated by having a group of voices divided into two sections, simultaneously singing *The Long, Long Trail* and *Keep the Home Fires Burning* (mak-

ing sure that they are together on the first down-beat, represented by the words “long” and “keep”). Dvorak’s *Humoresque* can be sung or played as a counter-melody to Foster’s *Old Folks at Home*, and an older generation performed a similar trick with *The Spanish Cavalier* and *Solomon Levi*. Even *Yankee Doodle* and *Dixie* can be made to harmonize throughout the first part of their melodies, with *Home, Sweet Home* a possible addition.

When people sing a round, they are making a melody harmonize with itself, by the overlapping of the voices, the tune being so constructed as to fall naturally into three or four sections, all of which harmonize with each other. By bringing in the parts one at a time, on the right beats, an effect of harmony is created, although the voices are continually moving. Most people are familiar with a few such rounds as *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*, *Three Blind Mice*, *Scotland’s Burning* and the French *Frère Jacques*.

Music uses the term “canon” for a melody

harmonizing with itself, and it is only when the canon is of the strict "unison" type, starting always on the same note, that it is technically called a round. The definite harmonizing of one melody with another is called "counterpoint," meaning literally "note against note."

Music which consists of a single melody, plus a harmonious but unmelodic accompaniment, is generally called "homophonic," or single-voiced, as contrasted with the "polyphonic" style, which makes two or more melodies harmonize with each other. While the performers of polyphonic music (particularly in the simple form of a round) can have a lot of fun, the listener will generally find more satisfaction in a clearly defined melody, harmonized with chords or a running accompaniment.

The word "harmony," in the original Greek sense, meant merely system or organization, and the word was often applied to the actual scales or "modes." These modes were not well adapted to harmony as we know it today, and most of the

## 54 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

music built upon them was played or sung in unison, possibly with actual octaves created by male and female voices singing the same melody.

The possibility of making a melody harmonize with itself was discovered by a monk, Hucbald, in the tenth century. He called this rough type of harmonizing "organum" or "diaphony." Later the term "discantus" was applied to the harmonizing of two different melodies, a great improvement over the primitive "organum."

When the English became a race of polyphonic singers, in the sixteenth century, with their madrigals, motets and glees, they referred to one of the harmonizing parts as the "descant." Such a part was often improvised, and the good singers of the day could unquestionably perform some amazing tricks, both at sight and by ear. It was customary at social gatherings to pass out songbooks from which the entire company were expected to read their parts immediately, in perfect harmony! The increasing difficulty and com-

substitution of instruments for human voices. But harmony for its own sake, apart from polyphonic, melodic combinations, hardly existed before about 1600, which also dates the beginnings of opera.

Chords, like houses, are built from the bottom up. The bass-note or "root" of a chord may be considered its most important part, but each step of the scale permits a great variety of combinations to be built upon it as a foundation.

The perfect major chord (already discovered by sounding together the opening tones of *The Star-spangled Banner*) consists of the key-note as a root or bass, the third, the fifth and the octave. In the key of C these notes would be C, E, G, C (above). Numbering the absolute scale by intervals, you would combine 1, 3, 5 and 8 for a perfect major chord.

This is the commonest of harmonies, as already indicated. It can be used as the sole accompaniment to a round like *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*, merely keeping the voices together on the

beat. It is also sufficient accompaniment for a few tunes like *The Farmer in the Dell* or *Little Liza Jane*, or any of the bugle melodies (which are built on the three different notes of the chord itself). The perfect major chord is often called "tonic," because it is built on the key-note, also known as the tonic.

Next to the tonic chord, the commonest harmony is the so-called "dominant," built upon the fifth interval above the key-note. The tonic chord of C major would have its dominant on G, which is the fifth interval above C. There is also a so-called "sub-dominant" chord which is built upon the fourth (F above C). These three chords are enough to harmonize a large percentage of all the familiar melodies of the world. They are all actually tonic chords in different keys, with their intervals numbered 1, 3, 5 and 8. In the key of G (the dominant of C) the notes would be G, B, D, G (above). In the key of F (the sub-dominant of C) they would be F, A, C, F (above).

Some simple tunes can be harmonized with

only two of these chords, tonic and dominant. The list would include *London Bridge is Falling Down*, *Three Blind Mice*, *Chop-sticks*, *Ach, du lieber Augustin* ("The more we get together"), *Billy Boy* and *Long, Long Ago*. With all three (tonic, dominant and sub-dominant) it is possible to harmonize most of the Foster songs, *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*, *America*, *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* (*Malbrough*), a great many hymns, including *Rock of Ages* and the *Doxology*, *Silent Night*, *Auld Lang Syne*, *Dixie*, the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and hundreds of others.

Thus the basic pattern of harmony turns out to be the four tones numbered 1, 3, 5 and 8 in the scale, and this pattern merely requires slight variations and additions to fill all the needs of even a fairly elaborate harmony. The addition of the flat seventh step (or its substitution for the octave) creates an excellent effect, and this is particularly common in the dominant chord, which is then loosely called the "dominant seventh." When the seventh is included in the major

chord at the end of a piece it is generally considered a “blue ending,” left hanging in the air as it were, and this interval of the seventh, (actually the minor seventh, which would be B-flat in the key of C) is characteristic of most of the so-called “blue” harmonies.

A chord containing a minor seventh may be “diminished” by moving the bass-note up half a tone (since the seventh itself could not be further reduced). This harmony is very popular with barber shop quartets. (In the key of C the diminished seventh chord would be C-sharp, E, G, B-flat, with possible “inversions” reading E, G, B-flat, C-sharp, upwards, or G, B-flat, C-sharp, E, or B-flat, C-sharp, E, G.)

The interval of the fifth in a major chord may be “augmented” by moving it half a tone upward, and this is also a common barber shop effect. With C as a bass, the other notes would be E, G-sharp (instead of G natural) and the octave C above. A major chord can be turned into a minor by simply dropping the interval of the third a

half tone. The E in the C major chord would thus become E-flat to make it a C minor chord.

These relationships are all quite obvious to the ear, even though they may sound complicated in print. Any listener can soon learn to distinguish major and minor harmonies and to recognize a diminished or augmented interval without difficulty. It is not even hard to sing them by ear or to read them at sight from the printed notes.

For ordinary purposes, the chords thus far indicated will supply ample harmony. A barber shop quartet does very well with such equipment, but gets its best effects through unexpected jumps to apparently unrelated chords, occasionally ending on a "blue" harmony (with a minor seventh added to the major triad) or slipping in an unconventional sixth or even a second as a piquant touch. Characteristic of such harmonizing (which suggests the improvisation found in all folk-music) is the echoing of a solo or unison line on full chords, as well as the moving of three voices around a sustained melodic note, produc-

ing the familiar "barber shop ending." It is customary for the tenor in a barber shop quartet to sing always above the melodic "lead" (or second tenor), again producing a characteristic effect, quite different from that of a concert quartet or a glee club, which generally gives the melody to the top voice.

A mildly modern effect is produced by chords of the ninth, obtained by Debussy, Ravel and other composers through their use of the "whole tone scale." Here the regular half-tone intervals, from the third to the fourth and the seventh to the eighth, are eliminated, putting the entire scale into whole tones. A "whole tone" progression in C major would run as C, D, E, F-sharp, G-sharp, A-sharp, C (*B-sharp*), D. Instead of a perfect major chord (C, E, G, C), one would thus get a chord of the ninth (C, E, A-sharp or B-flat, D). It is amusing to harmonize a simple tune on a succession of such chords, making the melody note always the ninth above the root, like D over C, one tone more than an octave below. Our pop-

ular composers and arrangers discovered this “whole tone” pattern long ago and have made good use of it in their harmonies.

There are many compositions, both light and serious, in which the organizing factor of harmony is outstanding. The Barnby setting of Tennyson's *Sweet and Low* is always a delight to mixed quartets and there are similar thrills for harmonizers in Pinsut's *Good-night, Good-night Beloved* and the familiar hymn, *Now the Day is Over*.

American popular music has some excellent examples of logical harmonizing in songs like Jerome Kern's *All the Things You Are* (which contains a so-called “enharmonic change”), George Gershwin's *The Man I Love* (which derives its melody from the traditional “blue ending” and uses a descending chromatic scale as a counter-melody), Richard Rodgers' *Lover* (again making good use of chromatic intervals), and Cole Porter's *Night and Day*, which is full of modern devices and musicianly effects.

For a series of logical chords on the piano, listen to Chopin's familiar *Prelude in C minor* (No. 20), which is not at all hard to play. There is a fascination also in the accompaniment which Peter Cornelius wrote for his song, *Ein Ton (Monotone)* in which the melody actually stays on one note all the way, with only the harmony to give it variety. A lovely harmonizing of three voices will be found in the female chorus, *Lift Thine Eyes*, in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

To the layman the subject of harmony will always remain something of a mystery, largely because musicians have chosen to obscure it with a nomenclature that is largely artificial and, in the light of modern practice, almost meaningless. Harmony is something that should appeal to the ear, not the eye, and if one can learn to harmonize a melody by ear, vocally or on the piano, it is of more practical value than to be able to call a great many chords by their accepted names. If later one succeeds in writing out logical parts for four voices or instruments, or for both hands

on the piano, so much the better. But a baby should learn to talk before it is taught to spell and write, and the same is true of music. The conventional subject of harmony is nothing more than the "correct" spelling of chords, and it would seem a normal process to become thoroughly familiar with those chords by ear before trying to spell or write them.

Once more it is recognition that marks the first step toward appreciation and enjoyment. Whether you use technical terms like tonic, dominant and sub-dominant, or number these common chords as one, two and three (or by their actual intervals: one, five and four), the satisfaction of recognizing a true and universal pattern is the same, and this can be achieved without special training or preparation, as a normal part of human experience.



## V. TONE COLOR IS QUALITY

In 1

the organization of sound toward beauty is Tone Color, already defined as the quality or *timbre* of a tone or combination of tones. Its importance in the music of today is due to the fact that the resources of melody, rhythm and harmony have been so nearly exhausted, whereas the possibilities of instrumentation and the invention or discovery of new effects of tone color seem to be infinite. It is no longer easy to be original in rhythm or melody or harmony, unless one goes in for absurdly illogical and deliberately ugly progressions and combinations. But with tone color there are always new opportunities for ex-

perimentation, and there are many effects in music today that were undreamed of only a few years ago.

For the full enjoyment of music, one should have the ability not only to recognize patterns of rhythm, melody and harmony, but also to distinguish the tone color or quality of individual instruments and various types of human voices, and eventually to analyze their effects in combination. In some respects the ability to recognize tone color is the easiest of all to acquire, for most musical instruments have quite a definite quality of tone, while the difference between male and female voices and even between soprano and alto or tenor and bass is fairly obvious.

There are three ways of generating musical tone, which might be called, freely, striking, rubbing and blowing. In order to make the air vibrate, some tone-producing surface must first be set in vibration. This may be accomplished by a blow, like that of a drumstick, or by continuous

friction, like that of a bow across a string, or by the mere passage of air through a tube, as in various wind-instruments.

Actually, it all comes down to a definite contact between two surfaces, or between a surface and a controlled column of air, and the impression of a continuous tone is easily created by what is essentially a series of forcible contacts. The hum of a gasoline engine makes us forget that we are actually hearing a series of explosions, and the roll of a pair of drumsticks may produce as steady and continuous a tone as the passing of a bow across a string.

Percussion is the simplest and most primitive method of producing a tone, and every musical tone can be reduced to a percussion of some sort, or to a series of percussions. Singers often speak of the "stroke of the glottis"; and the attack of the breath upon the vocal cords, which are the tone-producing vibrators of the human voice, is like a real blow, although frequently a very gentle one.

The human voice is a wind-instrument, and the vocal cords are like the vibrating reeds that are placed in the mouthpieces of some actual members of the wood-wind family. The color of the resulting tone depends partly on the vocal cords themselves, as on the instrumental reeds, and partly on the resonators that amplify the tone.

People who sing or speak badly try to make their vocal cords do all the work. Their voices sound "throaty," and they obviously strain to create more volume. In a very short time they become hoarse, for the throat makes desperate efforts to protect itself and its vocal cords against the strain, and the result is a so-called "frog."

The resonators are most important in this whole matter of tone color, and their quality makes all the difference between a good and a bad instrument. The tone of a small tuning-fork is almost inaudible. But when one end of the fork is placed against a wooden surface (after starting the vibrations by tapping the forked end), the added resonance immediately makes the tone

clear, strong and beautiful. A piano would have very little tone without its wooden sounding-board. Drums have their volume and quality affected by the size and shape of their resonating chambers, and so do the members of the violin family, harps, etc. Wind-instruments depend upon the size and shape of their tubes and the formation of the opening from which the tone emerges. A pipe-organ takes in a great variety of resonating chambers, with a consequent versatility in its command of tone color.

Percussion is the starting-point of all tone. The earliest drum-beats had no definite pitch, and were probably mere blows upon a hollow log. A big advance was made when a skin was first stretched across the end of the hollow log, and the resulting tone could be credited with musical pitch of a sort. When it was found that a more tightly stretched drum-head produced a tone of higher pitch, a definite step toward melody had been taken.

From the drums of different pitches to the

strings of a lyre or harp is a logical progression. A taut string is merely a reduced section of a drum-head, with far greater possibilities of tonal beauty and accuracy of pitch. There are fantastic stories of the invention of the lyre by Apollo or Mercury. But, actually, the earliest stringed instrument must have been a mono-chord (possibly a mere bow-string, pulled tight) or some sort of box or surface covered by a single string. It is possible that progress was first made by stretching several strings on a frame or over a gourd or shell, drawing them to various degrees of tightness and therefore producing a different pitch with each string.

From the primitive harp or lyre were developed the dulcimer (the first instrument to be played with hammers for melodic effect), the zither, the cymbalom of the gypsies, the lute, mandolin, guitar, banjo and ukulele, the xylo-phone, marimba, glockenspiel and celesta, the Russian balalaika, all the members of the viol family, and the modern pianoforte, with its an-

cestors, the clavichord, harpsichord, spinet and virginal. A distinction is generally made between bowed instruments and those which are plucked by the fingers or with a plectrum, or struck with hammers. But essentially they all belong to the percussion family.

Wind-instruments were the commonest purveyors of melody in its early stages, and this classification naturally includes the human voice. Again there are fanciful stories of the invention of wind-instruments like the pipes of Pan. But it is easy to imagine almost any savage breaking off a hollow reed and finding ways of producing a musical tone by blowing through it; flutes of some sort are common among the primitive instruments of all the world.

The earliest horns and trumpets were probably made from shells or the horns of animals, chiefly to serve as signals or inspire terror, without definite pitch. In fact, the real control of trumpet tones is a fairly modern development in music, resting on the discovery that the col-

umn of air in a tube can be shortened exactly as a string is shortened, by piercing the tube with holes at various points (as in a flute) and then stopping certain ones with the fingers, or by sliding one tube into another (as with a trombone), or by bending the tube into several sections, which can then be shut off from each other by means of valves or pistons.

The flute produces the purest tone of all wind-instruments, simply because the method of blowing permits no interference whatever and thus practically eliminates the overtones. The human breath blows across a hole in the tube, directly setting the air in vibration. There is practically no friction at the point of production, and the resulting tone might almost be called colorless, although undeniably charming.

Aside from the flute itself (which was originally made of wood and later of metal), the distinguishing mark of all the wood-wind family is the reed or pair of reeds used for producing the tone. The clarinet and bass clarinet are played

with a single reed, set in a chisel-shaped mouth-piece. This reed is actually a flat piece of cane or some other light wood set in vibration by the breath. (The principle is the same as that of blowing upon a piece of grass held between the two hands.)

The double-reed instruments have no mouth-piece, but expose the two reeds directly to the lips, which by the passage of the breath set them vibrating against each other, producing a more strident and certainly a more colorful tone than the single reeds. The oboe is the most important of the double-reed instruments, and it is to be found in quite ancient forms, represented also by the hautboys of the Middle Ages (literally *haut bois*, or "high wood"). Its alto counterpart is to be found in the "English horn" (*cor anglais*), which is neither English nor a horn, but merely a lower-voiced oboe, with a cup-shaped end and a curving mouthpiece. The bassoon is the bass of the double-reed family, with its tube doubled up for the sake of a lower register, and a mouth-

piece extending from the side. There is also a contra-bassoon, which can play a whole octave lower.

The saxophone, while not generally recognized by the symphony orchestra, has proved a most practical instrument in smaller groups, and can be made to take the place of some of the regular wood-winds when players of these instruments are not available. It is really a metal clarinet with a single reed and a special quality of tone, by no means unpleasant when well produced, getting its volume and *timbre* chiefly from the large bowl, suggestive of a Dutchman's pipe.

Among the recognized brass instruments, the French horn has the most beautiful tone color and is also closest to the real horn of tradition, used originally for hunting and signalling purposes. The Germans still call the instrument a *Waldhorn* (forest horn) and its shape, with the wide bell and curved tube, suggests the old prints of actual hunting-scenes. There is also the trumpet, with its close relative, the cornet; and for the

lower registers we have the alto horn (used mostly in brass bands), the trombone and the tuba, which is the real bass of the brass. It should be remembered that the pipe-organ is a wind-instrument, producing many of the effects of brass and wood-winds. The harmonium, or parlor organ, is a reed instrument, with a different reed for each tone. The harmonica, or mouth-organ, also uses reeds, as do the accordion and the concertina, all representing the principle of the reed-organ on a smaller scale.

The modern members of the viol family are the violin, viola, violoncello (generally abbreviated to "cello"), and double-bass or bass-viol (called the "string bass" in jazz bands). Among their ancestors were the viola d'amore, viola da gamba, the rebeck, the Welsh crowder and the ancient Chinese fiddle. All have the common characteristic of being played with a bow, thus producing a tone color that is quite different from that of plucked or hammered strings or of wind-instruments.

The great variety of possible tone color can be imagined when it is realized not only that there are many different instruments of various families, but that each instrument has a certain individuality of tone, like the individual human voice, and finally that each instrument and each voice represents a wide variety of colors within its own range. The lower tones of a flute are quite different from the higher. The G string of a violin has an absolutely different quality from that of any of the other three; and even the average human voice shows a wide range of color, both in speaking and in singing.

Beyond all this diversity of individual *timbre*, there are almost endless possibilities of multiplying musical instruments and human voices and of combining them harmoniously, excitingly, sometimes even discordantly. Twenty violins playing in unison produce a tone that is absolutely unlike the tone of a solo violin, quite apart from the difference in volume, and when several hundred male voices sing softly together,

a completely new tone color is produced, having nothing in common with the more familiar types of singing. The possibilities of the symphony orchestra were scarcely realized before the time of Berlioz and Wagner; and such composers as Richard Strauss, Tschaikowsky, Debussy, Stravinsky and Prokofieff have literally created tonal colorings of which Haydn, Mozart and even Beethoven did not dream.

The natural qualities of many of the musical instruments have been further augmented by such devices as muting, the playing of harmonics (overtones), striking the strings with the stick of the bow, playing close to the bridge, etc., often producing weird and unearthly noises, occasionally complicated still further by mere sound effects, such as the wind-machine that Strauss brought into his *Don Quixote*, the taxi-horns in Gershwin's *An American in Paris*, and the recorded voice of an actual nightingale in Respighi's *Pines of Rome*.

: In view of the obvious limitations of rhythm,

melody and harmony and the enormous range of simple and compound tonal coloring that is possible in modern music, it is only natural that the average listener should find the greatest fascination in analyzing instrumental and vocal effects and observing closely the part played by skillful arrangement and orchestration in the final appeal of every significant composition.

Just as the patterns of harmony are likely to run in groups of four tones (the conventional chord), so one may speak freely of patterns of tone color, also grouped in foursomes. Actually these patterns are far less accurate than those of rhythm, melody or harmony, yet the quartet combination is one of the fixed traditions of music, and it produces a definite, composite tonal coloring, much as the harmonizing of a single tone in four parts provides that tone with a distinctly new quality.

The mixed quartet of human voices consists of soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Its parallel in instrumental music is the string quartet, in which

violins take the parts of soprano and alto, with the viola as tenor and the cello as bass. When the string quartet, with each instrument multiplied many times, becomes the major portion of a symphony orchestra, a fifth part is added in the double-basses, which theoretically support the cellos by doubling the bass part an octave lower, but actually supply the foundation for the entire orchestral harmony, leaving the cellos free for significant parts of their own, often including the responsibility for important melodic passages.

But the orchestra includes several other quartets in addition to the strings. Within the wood-winds alone, several complete quartets can be assembled, using various combinations of flutes, clarinets, oboe, English horn, bassoon and contra-bassoon or bass-clarinet. The four French horns of the symphony orchestra are a complete quartet in themselves (listen to them in the Overture to Weber's *Freischütz*, for example), but they also combine admirably with various pat-

terns of the wood-wind choir and are usually seated close to that section.

The real brass quartet of the orchestra consists of first and second trumpets, a trombone and a bass tuba. But again it is possible to have a complete quartet of trombones alone, and separate trombone parts are very common. The French horns can also be combined with members of the regular brass section, while in a brass band the soprano part is likely to be played by clarinets, flutes, cornets or trumpets, individually or in unison, with alto horns corresponding to the alto voice, trombones acting as tenors and the tuba or Sousaphone as the bass.

Even the percussion section of a symphony orchestra may have four or more instruments playing simultaneously, with tympani (kettle-drums), bass and side-drums, triangle, cymbals, bells, chimes, gongs, tambourine, castanets and xylophones available, and while these do not actually harmonize, being mostly without definite pitch, they produce a wide variety of tone

color. (It is only necessary to hear the bass drum alone and then with the cymbals added to realize the enormous difference made by even so simple a combination.)

With so many possible quartet patterns in the full-sized symphony orchestra, it is worth remembering also that the entire instrumental body divides naturally into four sections: the strings, wood-wind, brass and percussion. It is not therefore merely fanciful to say that the pattern of four parts, which is the essence of harmony (even though one note may be a duplication of another, as in the perfect major chord), appears again in the logical combinations creating instrumental and vocal tone color.

It may be more than a coincidence also that melody, logically carried out, runs in sections of four, eight, sixteen and thirty-two measures; and the majority of time-patterns likewise show four beats to a measure (or the same thing divided in half), while even the three-beat waltz time, when heard from the standpoint of its one accented

beat per measure, easily impresses the ear as a succession of groups of four outstanding accents.

In the commonest and most practical of the stringed instruments, the four-part tonal coloring persists, through the pattern of the strings themselves. Each member of the string quartet has four strings and each of these strings has its individual quality of tone. (A mandolin is tuned the same as a violin, sometimes using a banjo head, and the familiar ukulele also has four strings, although with a different tuning.)

Solos for the violin are so numerous and important as to deserve some special attention later. The cello is also a popular solo instrument, as in such broad melodies as Bach's *Arioso* and the popular *Swan (Le Cygne)* of Saint-Saëns, plus some excellent sonatas and concertos. In the symphony orchestra the cellos are often given important themes, as in the first movement of Brahms' *Second Symphony*. There is an effective quartet of cellos at the start of Rossini's *William Tell* Overture and another appears in the last act

of Puccini's *Tosca*. Wagner uses harmonizing cellos to accompany Siegmund's love-music in *Die Walküre*. Beethoven combines them with violas for the slow melody of his *Fifth Symphony* and again entrusts the cellos with the first complete statement of the Finale theme for the *Ode to Joy* in his tremendous *Ninth*.

The viola is seldom heard as a solo instrument, but is a very important member of the string quartet, and the viola group in a symphony orchestra is often given beautiful parts to play. Its share in the slow theme of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* has just been mentioned, and there are good rapid passages for the violas in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* Overture, representing the Venusberg. A familiar and effective piece exhibiting the solo viola is the section of Ippolitoff-Ivanoff's *Caucasian Sketches* called *In the Village*. There is also an excellent viola solo in the *Algerian Suite* of Saint-Saëns (*Reverie du Soir*).

Beethoven was the first composer to realize

the possibilities of the double-bass in the orchestra, and this huge, unwieldy instrument is today an important factor in tonal coloring, both in serious and in lighter music. It looks like an oversized cello and has to be played standing up, or sitting on a high stool. Its range is an octave lower than that of the cello, and the music has to be written an octave higher than it is actually played. While the double-bass has been used for solos (Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was formerly a virtuoso on the instrument), its chief function is as the groundwork of the orchestral string section. Beethoven's rapid passages for the double-basses in his *Fifth Symphony* were called by Berlioz "The happy gambols of an elephant." He used similar effects in his *Leonore* Overture, No. 3, while in the *Ninth Symphony* the double-basses play an almost human role in arguing over the possible theme for the choral finish.

All of the bowed instruments can be played "pizzicato," that is, by plucking the strings with

the fingers instead of using the bow, and this effect is a valuable addition to string quality, particularly in the bass members of the group, which can thus emphasize a rhythmic accompaniment. (The string bass in a jazz band does far more plucking and "slapping" than bowing, particularly when carrying a boogie-woogie pattern.) A good example of continuous *pizzicato* by all the strings is found in the Scherzo of Tschaikowsky's *Fourth Symphony*, as well as its frank and popular imitation, David Rose's *Holiday for Strings*.

Muting of the strings is accomplished by slipping a metal or ebony clamp over the top of the bridge, deadening some of the overtones, besides decreasing the volume of sound. A "tremolo" effect (also called "agitato," but not to be confused with the routine "vibrato" employed by string soloists to add life to an individual tone) is produced by having the bow quiver very rapidly back and forth across the strings. There is also the weird "ponticello" effect already men-

tioned (keeping the bow very close to the bridge), plus a few special tricks like bouncing the bow ("saltando"), rubbing the strings with the stick instead of the hair, plucking them with the left instead of the right hand, etc.

The advantage of a bowed over a plucked or hammered string-instrument is that the tone can be sustained and even swelled after it starts, whereas in a true percussion-instrument, such as the harp or the piano, the tone begins to die away the moment after the string is struck. This robs the percussive stringed instruments of much of their potential tone color and is the chief reason for the comparative insignificance of such minor instruments as the mandolin, banjo and ukulele.

The piano derives its variety of color largely from its complex tonal combinations, and from the use of the pedals, which permit a versatile command of overtones. There is a great range of volume as well as of pitch, but the player has practically no control of the color of an individ-

ual tone, once it has been created by the mechanical dropping of a hammer upon the strings.

The harp is still further handicapped, although its strings are set in motion directly by the hands instead of through hammers. It has a certain variety of color, largely dependent on pitch and volume, with special effects of harmonics, "glissando," etc. But it is dynamically limited because of the lack of resonators, as compared with the piano and its sounding-board (actually suggesting a harp laid on its side, over a wooden surface). The xylophone, marimba, celesta, glockenspiel, etc., all show similar limitations, although each has a distinctive tone color within its own range.

Wind-instruments in general have a more decided tone color than do the strings. The flute (almost colorless in its upper range) exhibits an individual quality in its lower tones, while the small flute known as the piccolo (one half the length of the regular flute and therefore sounding exactly an octave higher) produces shrill and

often piercingly unpleasant tones. (Sousa made good use of the piccolo in the climax of his *Stars and Stripes Forever*.)

There are flute sonatas by Bach and other composers, with two famous melodies played by the flute to represent the atmosphere of the Elysian Fields in Gluck's opera, *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Three harmonizing flutes are used effectively by Tschaikowsky for the *Danse des Mirlitons* (*Dance of the Toy Pipes*) in his *Nutcracker Suite*.

The double-reed instruments—oboe, English horn and bassoon—all have something of a nasal quality, making their tones very penetrating and also sometimes unpleasant or comical in their effect. The bassoon in particular has served as the comedian of the orchestra, being used for grotesque passages in Wagner's *Meistersinger* Prelude, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* of Paul Dukas and the absurd *Fuchslied* (*Freshman Song*) of Brahms' *Academic Festival Overture*.

Beethoven used the oboe for its gay quality in

the Scherzo of his *Pastoral Symphony* (No. 6) and for a melancholy effect in the funeral march of the *Eroica* (No. 3). Tschaikowsky makes good use of it in his *Fourth Symphony* and Richard Strauss has some beautiful oboe passages in his tone poem, *Don Juan*.

The alto oboe, or English horn, plays a famous solo in the last act of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, representing a shepherd's pipe, and its slow melody in Dvorak's *New World Symphony* is also well known (partly because of its vogue as a pseudo-spiritual, *Goin' Home*). Cesar Franck gives the English horn a beautiful solo in the slow movement of his *D minor Symphony*, accompanied by pizzicato strings and harp.

The clarinet has a more mellow voice than any of the double-reed instruments, and has proved very practical in smaller instrumental combinations, where it can play the soprano part in almost any pattern of wood-wind, strings or brass. It has a beautiful theme in the first movement of Tschaikowsky's *Pathétique Symphony* (No. 6).

and was popular with Liszt in his tone poems. Richard Strauss gives the theme of *Sancho Panza* in his *Don Quixote* to the bass-clarinet, which is usually a mere filler at the bottom of wood-wind harmony.

Trumpet and bugle calls have already been discussed, with emphasis on the off-stage trumpet used by Beethoven in *Fidelio* as well as in the third *Leonore* Overture. A fanfare of any kind is usually entrusted to the brass, as at the start of Tschaikowsky's *Fourth Symphony*. Hunting-calls are logically given to the horns, whose individual quality obviously appealed to Wagner and Strauss (as in the latter's *Don Juan*). In general the French horns are milder and mellower in quality than the conventional brass. The trombones have a definite blaring sound, easily distinguished by ear, in addition to the visual effect produced by their sliding technique. They are prominent in the Prelude to the third act of Wagner's *Lohengrin*, representing a torchlight procession. Comedy effects, such as the hyena

laugh, have been introduced into modern popular music for the trombone. The tuba is used by Wagner for the voice of the dragon in *Siegfried* and the same composer employs various combinations of brass to excellent effect in *Siegfried's Funeral March* (*Götterdämmerung*), the *Pilgrims' Chorus* (*Tannhäuser*) and some of the solemn moments in *Parsifal*.

By carefully listening to the different instruments, singly and in combination, one may learn to distinguish a great variety of tone colors, and the whole subject will be found endlessly fascinating. It was believed at one time that the seven colors of the spectrum definitely corresponded to the seven steps of the diatonic scale, and even in modern times there have been interesting experiments in combining actual color and sound, as in the *Prometheus* Symphony of Scriabine and the practical "color-organ" of Thomas Wilfred, not to speak of such screen cartoons as Walt Disney's *Fantasia* and the direct visualization of music by Werner Jänssen and others.

While any discussion of tone color must necessarily be in somewhat vague terms, as compared with the more accurate patterns of rhythm, melody and harmony, the very fact that it leaves so much to the imagination and direct investigation of the listener adds enormously to the general appeal of the entire subject.

For a great variety of tone color Tschaikowsky's *Fourth Symphony* is a good choice, particularly the Scherzo, whose pizzicato strings have already been mentioned. In addition to this novel effect, one hears alternating combinations of wood-wind and brass in the same movement. The *Nutcracker Suite* of Tschaikowsky contains many successful experiments in tonal coloring, including the use of a celesta in the *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* and a shrill piccolo for a Chinese effect. The Tschaikowsky String Quartet makes easy listening for this classic combination, particularly the familiar *Andante Cantabile* (containing the melody that was borrowed for the popular song, *On the Isle of May*).

Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun* contains beautiful passages for the wood-wind, while Ravel's *Mother Goose* Suite is full of instrumental novelty. There is brilliant orchestration in Rímsky-Korsakoff's *Spanish Caprice*, emphasizing percussion and string technique. For a good, solid parade of brass, you can hardly go wrong with Sousa's immortal march, *The Stars and Stripes Forever*.



## VI. A MATTER OF FORM

The organizing factors of rhythm, melody, harmony and tone color enter into every musical composition of real importance. The principles of Form co-ordinate them into a complete work of art.

Form in music is similar to form in athletics. It means the attainment of the greatest results with the least waste of effort. Strength and energy alone will not make a good golfer or tennis player, or a football, baseball, track or basketball star. A command of form is required to make the most of an athlete's natural resources.

The composer uses the raw materials of tones in time just as the athlete uses raw strength and

speed. Both apply form or technique to make the best possible use of their inherent gifts.

All of the principles already discussed are necessary factors in form, style and musicianship. But form goes beyond all of these factors as an organizing force and therefore has an independent significance.

It is possible for a musician to be a master of form without the creative inspiration to give it real importance; and this is true also of painters, writers and other artists. It is also possible for a human being with vast creative instincts to fail in the achievement of true art because of neglecting the technique of form and thus failing to deliver his thoughts, moods and emotions to others.

Rhythm, melody and harmony are all to a certain extent instinctive, although the command of their expression may be developed through experience and training. Form also may be largely instinctive (as in the better examples of folk-music), but as a rule it is acquired through study and practice and it may be an entirely artificial

attainment. (This again applies to sports as well as to music.)

The great composer, naturally, is the one who possesses unusual creative ability and combines with it a highly developed command of form. This form is not necessarily elaborate, although a complicated piece, of large proportions, is potentially more significant than a brief and simple melody. Similarly a book is likely to prove more important than a short story or a newspaper paragraph; a portrait or landscape makes a deeper impression than a hasty sketch or cartoon, and a cathedral certainly represents more art than a bungalow or a garage. Yet each of these modest structures may exhibit a form that is distinctive and, within its limitations, decidedly worth while; it would be a mistake to suggest that mere size is in any way admirable. (This mistake, however, is frequently made in every branch of art.)

A bad symphony is perhaps worse than a bad song, simply because its pretensions are so much

greater, and a bad opera may be worse than either. But a correctly made symphony or opera deserves no particular credit beyond that of honest workmanship, and if its composer happens to be utterly uninspired, there is no reason for glossing over the fact with hypocritical praise of his technique. Anybody can learn to write a symphony, just as anybody can learn to write a book. But how many books are really worth reading? And how many symphonies do people honestly want to hear over and over again?

The necessity of form in music is practical as well as artistic. A melody soon becomes monotonous if repeated continually and this is the early fate of most popular music. A song of any kind must at least have its own limited form, and if within those limitations it achieves permanence, that is all the more a tribute to its inherent qualities of inspiration. (Stephen Foster again provides the classic examples of such permanence.)

But the greatest melody can hardly stand the

test of being played over and over without a stop. Even the practical music of the dance-floor is always arranged so as to avoid complete monotony, usually by the combination of several tunes, with interludes, and frequent changes of key and instrumentation. A composer in the larger forms does all these things far more elaborately, often with a smaller amount of melodic material to start with.

The basic principle of all form in art is that of contrast. That is the best way to avoid monotony; and when contrasting musical material is followed by a reminder of what had previously been presented, the effect on the listener is most satisfying. So the basic pattern of form may be summed up as Statement (Exposition), Contrast (Development) and Reminder (Recapitulation).

This is the basis of form not only in music but in a play or a novel. The author or playwright brings on his characters and states the situation that makes his story possible. If then he has nothing happen, but merely keeps the scene and

its characters in a static condition, he fails in his purpose. It is necessary for him to introduce some problem, some contrasting or hostile force that will create suspense and enlist the interest and sympathy of his audience. This is the plot of the play or novel, corresponding to the development of musical themes.

But if the playwright or novelist fails to solve his problem and arrive at a happy or at least a logical ending, he has again disappointed his audience and upset the principles of form. He must leave a final reminder that everything is as it should be, and similarly the musical composer ends with a recapitulation or reminder of his most important themes, creating satisfaction in the minds of his listeners.

Reduced to its simplest terms, this common pattern of form may be called A-B-A. The A represents the leading thematic material, which is repeated at the close, with B representing the contrasting material. While this is the essential principle of statement, contrast and reminder, it

has many possible variations. The A section, for instance, is frequently repeated before the B section begins. This would make the pattern A-A-B-A, which is the commonest form of the modern popular chorus. An excellent example is Jerome Kern's *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, whose chorus opens with eight measures of statement (the main theme), immediately repeated with a more definite close or "cadence." This is followed by eight measures of contrasting material in a different key (known to songwriters as the "release"), with a final reminder of the main theme supplying the last eight measures, to complete a chorus of four sections, A-A-B-A, totaling thirty-two measures.

For other examples of this common song form listen to the famous *Volga Boat Song*, the German *Lorelei* (composed by Friedrich Silcher), or the French *Au Clair de la Lune*, which is a perfect specimen of the A-A-B-A pattern, with the main theme absolutely identical in both statements as well as in the reminder.

It is fairly safe to look for some variation of the A-B-A form in practically all music. While the remainder of the first section will not always be found, it is almost inevitable that there should be contrast of some sort. (The Italian *Santa Lucia*, for instance, has the form of A-A-B-B, each of the two contrasting sections being immediately repeated.)

This universal necessity for contrast is exhibited even in the lesser details of form. A melody, as already indicated, almost always occupies an even number of measures, usually a multiple of four. These sets of four can in turn be divided into groups of two, and these groups will generally be found to have a contrasting effect, in the manner of a question and an answer. (Sometimes this effect is given even in two measures, the first acting as a question and the second as an answer.)

So the form of music enters into every step of construction, from a simple pattern of only a few tones to the complex architecture of a symphony.

One or two measures may constitute a phrase just like a few words of spoken language. When an answering phrase is added, we get a clause perhaps a musical sentence. If this clause ends in a perfect cadence (i.e., comes to a real close), it is called a "period," just as a complete sentence in English ends in a punctuation mark of the same name. (The word "strain" is loosely applied to such a period and sometimes to a complete melody.)

But the structure of a melody is only a small part of form in the larger sense. Where folk song and popular music are satisfied with the obvious and easily remembered material of single tune, the great composer almost always builds further, combining several themes or melodies in one composition, breaking them up into their component parts, changing the rhythm, the harmony, the key, and the instrumental colorings, possibly turning them upside down, and even letting two or more of them sound simultaneously.

The intricacies of classic and modern form are many, yet it is all quite likely to come down to some variant of the principle of statement, contrast and reminder. In the long run, form achieves unity through variety, which is a well-established axiom of art in general. Unity is meaningless if it represents nothing more than identity. But when a creative artist has combined seemingly antagonistic elements and arrived at a recognizable unity in spite of their contrasting qualities, he has put the stamp of individuality on his work, regardless of the originality of his basic materials.

The climax of the simple song form is found in "sonata form," the most elaborate flowering of the A-B-A root, permitting every conceivable treatment of melodic materials and resulting in some of the most sublime creations of musical genius. It follows, roughly, the technique of the playwright, with A serving as the exposition (statement of themes, corresponding to the characters in a play), B as the development or plot,

and A once more, though often greatly changed, as recapitulation, restatement, reminder—in short, the happy or logical ending.

Simpler than sonata form, but more elaborate than the song form, are the Rondo, the various dance forms and the common structure of Variations on a theme. Polyphonic or many-voiced music shows a great complexity of form, often within a small compass, with the fugue as its outstanding example.

The rondo, as its name implies, is based on a round dance, using a principal theme (A) and two or more subsidiary themes (B, C, etc.) which are presented in rotation, always alternating with the main theme. A rondo may end with its A theme or with a coda ("tail") tacked on merely for a finish, and made of either old or new material. The form would thus be A-B-A-C-A, etc. The tempo is usually fast, and this makes the rondo a popular form for the lighter movement of a sonata or symphony. A good example of a lively rondo will be found in the Finale of

Haydn's *Trio in G major*, often called the *Gypsy Rondo*. Mozart's *Rondo a la Turca* (supposedly in Turkish style) is also famous, and even more elaborate material will be found in Mendelssohn's *Rondo Capriccioso*, written, like Mozart's, for the piano.

The most important of the dance forms in serious music is the Minuet (already mentioned as an example of slow triple time), popular also in the literature of the symphony and the sonata. It has a definite form, the basic A-B-A, of which the first section is in two parts (each usually repeated), with the second (B) called the Trio (because it was originally played by three instruments), also repeated, and finally a single repetition or reminder of both parts of the A section. The minuet movement of a Haydn or Mozart symphony is generally attractive, and these should be heard orchestrally, in addition to the simpler piano minuets of Beethoven and Paderewski.

Variations on a theme can be of many different kinds. The commonest merely add extra notes to

the melody itself, disguising it only slightly. In the Variation form, the contrast is supplied by the changing decorations and embellishments, relieving the constant repetition of the same theme. Variations on a definite melody (not necessarily original with the composer) may constitute an entire composition, like those written by Brahms on themes by Haydn, Handel and Paganini, or serve as the slow movement of a sonata or symphony. The Andante of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is a classic example, as also the Theme and Variations forming the slow movement of his *Kreutzer Sonata* for violin and piano. Haydn has a fairly obvious set of Variations to the slow theme of his *Surprise Symphony*, in which an unexpectedly loud chord supplies the "surprise." Brahms went far beyond such comparatively simple decorations, using a melodic line merely as a starting-point and writing Variations of such individuality as to amount to completely original compositions, even when the basic theme was not his own. The Finale of his *Fourth Symphony* is

an amazing *Passacaglia*, consisting of thirty-four Variations superimposed upon little more than an E minor scale. Mendelssohn's *Variations Serieuses*, for piano, are attractive in a lighter style, with perhaps more significant musicianship in the *Symphonic Variations* of Cesar Franck, Bach's "Goldberg" series and Beethoven's Variations on a theme by Diabelli. Schubert created the slow movement of a String Quartet by writing Variations on his own song, *Death and the Maiden*, with a similar treatment of the melody of his *Die Forelle* (The Trout) in a quintet containing an extra cello.

The so-called Sonata Form appears most often in the first movement of a sonata or symphony, but may also be applied to such independent pieces as overtures and symphonic or tone poems. Its importance entitles it to a more detailed discussion than has been given to the simpler Song, Rondo, Minuet and Variation forms.

The word Sonata originally meant merely an instrumental ("sound") piece as contrasted with

a Cantata, or "song piece." In time it became a family name for instrumental compositions in at least three movements, the first of which was traditionally in sonata form. A symphony is actually a sonata for full orchestra and a Concerto is a sonata for a solo instrument with orchestral accompaniment. Many sonatas have been written for the piano alone, and many also for the violin, cello, clarinet, flute and other instruments, with piano accompaniment. In all of these the basic pattern known as sonata form is likely to be found at the start.

With the old reliable statement, contrast and reminder as a basis (A-B-A), sonata form gives a composer's musicianship and technique the widest possible range, with practically unlimited opportunities for creative imagination, added to the inspiration of the melodic material itself. There are always at least two themes of contrasting character (analogous to the hero and heroine of a novel or drama) and these are stated at the outset, perhaps preceded by an introduction,

which originally was a mere attention-caller, like a fanfare.

The first theme in a piece of sonata form is regularly in the basic key of the composition, with the second preferably in a different but related key, for example C and G. After these two themes have been introduced ("exposition"), perhaps with some individual development and even a connecting theme or two, the real workmanship of sonata form begins as a so-called "free fantasia" or development proper. This middle section (B) of sonata form provides the best opportunity for a composer to display his real command of musical resources. Anyone may invent an effective melody, and completely untaught musicians are constantly doing this very thing, as in the folk-music of the world and the popular songs of today. But it takes an experienced composer, with something more than melodic invention, to develop such material into a complete symphonic movement. On the other hand, the well-taught musician may have all the

formal technique at his command and still fail to create real interest because of the lack of individuality or inspiration in his work.

So there is every reason for the almost reverential attitude of experienced music-lovers toward a well-made symphony, and since the sonata form is so vital a part of such a musical creation, it is well worth the increasing attention and study of all those listeners who want to enjoy music to the fullest extent. No matter how complicated the details of form, it is always possible to follow the patterns of melody, the themes or tunes themselves, and with this melodic material as a starting-point, the rest will follow logically, depending upon the interest of the listener and the complexity of the composition. Even a single hearing should supply something in the way of tunes, rhythms, perhaps harmonies and tone colors for the memory to retain. After that it is merely a question of how often and how attentively the composition will be heard, each performance revealing new details of beauty. There is actually

no limit to such creative listening and it is doubtful whether a true masterpiece could ever reach a saturation point for the layman.

To complete the traditional sonata form, one hears a recapitulation or reminder of the leading themes (A), generally played in new keys and sometimes harmonizing with each other, with perhaps a coda at the close. Thus the basic pattern of form, A-B-A, is logically carried out, A representing the exposition, B the development and A once more as the recapitulation. Good examples of sonata form will be found in the opening movements of Mozart's *Symphony in G minor*, Beethoven's *Fifth* and Schubert's *Unfinished*. Mozart has two clearly defined themes (the first in G minor and the second in B-flat major), with a short connecting theme, also in B-flat. Beethoven builds up his first theme from the rhythmic, two-toned C minor motto ("Fate knocking at the door") and contrasts with it a flowing second melody in E-flat major. Schubert has an unusually important introductory theme, played by the

bass strings, followed by a melody in the wood-wind (both in B minor) and leading to the charming tune in G major (introduced by the cellos) made familiar by Sigmund Romberg's *Song of Love in Blossom Time* (a musical biography of Franz Schubert himself).

In all of these symphonic movements it will be found that the development section is of great importance. The earlier symphonies of Haydn paid less attention to this feature, even though that composer is given chief credit for permanently establishing sonata form. Mozart and Beethoven really concentrated on the development of thematic material, to be followed by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Tschaikowsky.

In the early days, the so-called "classic period" of music, form was considered more important than content, although such composers as Bach, Handel and Haydn also had an apparently limitless melodic invention. Later the "romantic period" emphasized the content rather than the form. Today there is real freedom in both direc-

tions, although technique may be said to have somewhat the better of inspiration. The modern technique, however, is something quite different from the strict rules and formal demands of the classic style.

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## VII. MUSIC WITH A PROGRAM

When the appeal of a composition depends entirely upon tonal design, or perhaps even the sensuous effect of beautiful sounds as such, it is known as "absolute" or "pure" music. But if the hearer is aided in his understanding of the music, even to the extent of a descriptive title, such as *Liebestraum* (Dream of Love) or *Dance of the Elves*, the piece is generally classified as "program music." This merely means that in some way it announces a definite "program" or meaning, perhaps in the form of a picture or a story, perhaps only in the clear and unmistakable promise of a certain mood or emotion. This program

may be supplied by an explanatory note on the part of a composer or by some obvious relation to a familiar plot or situation. (Examples are Wagner's *Faust* Overture and the tone poems of Liszt and other composers, carrying such titles as *Hamlet*, *Mazeppa*, etc.)

Freely speaking, the most obvious program music is that which has words, perhaps even action and scenery, to make its meaning clear, as in songs, opera and the ballet. But technically the term "program music" is applied only to instrumental compositions (without words) whose meaning is definitely announced either by the title or by some explanatory material or by both. Any piece with such a general title as Sonata, Symphony, String Quartet or Fugue, plus a key signature and perhaps an opus number (placing it chronologically in the composer's career), must be considered as "absolute music," unless its creator took pains to announce a program, as Beethoven did in his *Sixth* or *Pastoral Symphony* and Tschaikowsky in his *Fourth*, which

he interpreted in detail for his "beloved friend," Mme. Von Meck.

It may be significant that absolute music has often been supplied with programmatic titles without the intention or even the consent of its composer, sometimes after his death. The habit of trying to read into music stories, pictures and experiences of which its creator never dreamed is a common one and generally quite harmless. In modern times the ballet and motion pictures have added many a program to absolute music, sometimes with fantastic results.

Program music, in the strictly limited meaning of the term, can be classified as narrative (telling a story), descriptive (dealing with a scene from Nature or an actual picture) and perhaps imitative, although the last named classification usually co-operates with one of the others in suggesting such familiar sounds as bird-calls, rain, wind, thunder, a brook, etc. A fourth type might be called merely suggestive, but this hovers on the border-line between program and absolute

music. It should be realized also that a composition may be entirely clear in its program, with obvious effects of imitation, and yet display all the formal characteristics of the pure classic style.

As a general rule, program music is easier to grasp at a first hearing than is absolute music, and it may be argued that it is likely to have less significance for the very reason that it has so much to lean upon. If people are told in advance that a piece of music represents a certain picture or story, they will accept almost anything in good faith. The same effects may serve for an outburst of human temper or a thunder-storm, the lament of a grief-stricken mother or a passionate love-song, the rushing of a stream or a ride on a merry-go-round. Many of us can remember the improvising pianists in the old days of the silent movies, using the same "agitato" chords for a chase, a fire or a fight, while *Hearts and Flowers* served equally well for a reconciliation scene, the dawn of youthful affection or the

death of a beloved grandmother. The system is reduced to absurdity in such familiar tricks as the story of the *Three Trees*, in which the same combinations of tones at the piano always create the same monotonous "realism." Countless vaudeville acts, some of them very funny, have been built upon this simple principle of direct musical imitation.

While admitting the obviousness of much program music, it should be realized that almost all the great composers made some use of its immediate appeal, often with admirable results. As an introduction to music in general, the programmatic form of composition may be heartily recommended, as also the still more definite message delivered by words, action and scenery, in co-operation with purely tonal design.

Some of the earliest sonatas for organ and clavier had narrative or descriptive titles, mostly Biblical. Bach wrote a *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother*, with imitations of the postilion's horn, suggestions of the farewell words

of relatives and friends and detailed notes of an explanatory character. (The old French piano piece, Daquin's *Le Coucou*, has already been mentioned as an example of the two-tone pattern of the cuckoo's call.)

Handel wrote a set of Variations under the title of *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, which may have referred to a definite person, although the music is absolute rather than programmatic in character. Haydn gave descriptive titles to several of his symphonies, including one called *La Poule*, which imitated the noise of a cackling hen. Mozart's *Rondo a la Turca* suggested the tinkling sounds of Turkish music, and there are similar effects in Beethoven's *Turkish March*, part of his incidental music to *The Ruins of Athens*, which also includes a *Dance of the Dervishes*.

It is logical to consider Beethoven the first of the truly romantic composers, if only because of the large amount of program music that he created. Perhaps his worst and certainly his most

obvious composition was a so-called *Battle Symphony* (written for an early form of juke-box, Maelzel's Panharmonicon), in which the French army was represented by the old tune of *Malbrough* (now known as *We Won't Go Home Until Morning* or *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow*) and the English by *Rule, Britannia* and *God Save the King*. (When the French were defeated, the composer simply put a few measures of *Malbrough* into minor key.)

There is more legitimate program music in Beethoven's little rondo for the piano to which he gave the descriptive title "Fury over the lost penny, vented in a capriccio." On the other hand, the famous *Moonlight Sonata* had nothing to do with moonlight or any of the stories generally attached to it, but was written as a piece of absolute music, called merely "Sonata quasi una fantasia, in C-sharp minor, opus 27, no. 2."

Beethoven's overtures are all miniature dramas and many of them are played today as independent concert numbers. Outstanding are the *Egmont*

and *Coriolanus* overtures, both written as incidental music for dramas and clearly expressing the characters of their heroes and suggesting their tragic careers. There are four overtures to the opera, *Fidelio*, only one of which is known by that title. The other three are called *Leonore* (the name of the heroine), with number three generally recognized as the greatest and most popular.

But Beethoven's leaning toward program music extends even to his sonatas and symphonies. While the title of *Moonlight* was not his own, he definitely labelled opus 13 in the piano series *Pathétique* and later gave the names *Farewell*, *Absence* and *Return* to the three movements of the *Sonata in E-flat*, opus 81. (The *Appassionata* lives up to its title, but it came from the publisher, Cranz, not from Beethoven himself.)

Of the programmatic symphonies of Beethoven, the *Sixth*, or *Pastoral*, is provided with clear explanatory notes by the composer, indicating the "awakening of pleasant feelings on arriving

in the country," a "scene by the brook," a "merry gathering of country people," a realistic storm, and a shepherds' song, also described as "happy and thankful feelings after the storm." Beethoven called his third symphony *Eroica*, with Napoleon as the hero, but withdrew the dedication when Bonaparte accepted the Emperor's crown. The first movement of the *Fifth* has been described as "Fate knocking at the door," and in the second movement of his *Eighth Symphony* Beethoven jokingly imitated the ticking of the metronome, invented by his friend Maelzel. By the time he had arrived at the climactic *Ninth*, the composer gave way to his dramatic emotions by using actual words (Schiller's *Ode to Joy*) instead of merely announcing a program.

Weber has a definite program in the set of waltzes known as *Invitation to the Dance*, while his overtures to the operas, *Euryanthe*, *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*, tell their stories in music, with little need of words, action or scenery.

Franz Schubert, a thorough romanticist, gave

even his piano pieces such titles as *Marche Militaire* and *Moment Musical*, with programmatic significance also in the ballet music and entr'actes of his *Rosamunde*. Robert Schumann went much further in such compositions as *Papillons (Butterflies)*, *Carnaval*, *Scenes from Childhood* and *Album for the Young*. (*The Happy Farmer* and *Träumerei* are among the best known individual titles.) He formed a largely imaginary secret society called the Davidsbund, whose mission it was to battle against the Philistines of art, and this program was summed up in the *Davidsbündler Dances*, as well as the *March* which closes the *Carnaval*. Schumann also wrote three programmatic overtures, *Genoveva*, *Faust* and *Manfred*.

His good friend Mendelssohn shared this love of program music in the true romantic tradition. Those charming piano pieces, the *Songs without Words*, have such individual names as *Consolation*, *Confidence*, *Spinning Song* and, most familiar of them all, the eternally gay *Spring Song*.

Mendelssohn's amazing boyhood achievement, the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is one of the all-time great examples of program music, with a complete summary of Shakespeare's play, to which he later added a *Nocturne*, the famous *Wedding March* (for exit), a *Scherzo* of fairy lightness and other incidental music. To his concert overtures Mendelssohn gave such names as *Fingal's Cave (The Hebrides)*, *Calm Sea and a Prosperous Voyage*, *Ruy Blas* and *The Lovely Melusina*, while his symphonies derived some programmatic effect from the descriptive titles *Italian*, *Scotch* and *Reformation*.

Chopin has a *Butterfly* Etude and another known as *Revolutionary*. The familiar *Minute Waltz* was described by its composer as representing "a little dog chasing its tail" (inspired by George Sand's pet). There is a well-named *Raindrop* prelude and also a "military" polonaise. (The popular one in A-flat has been called *Heroic*.)

Hector Berlioz gave romantic titles to his symphonies, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Harold in Italy* and *Fantastic (An Episode in the Life of an Artist)*. His *Damnation of Faust* (which has words) contains such instrumental program music as the *Ballet of the Sylphs*, *Dance of the Will-o'-the-Wisps* and *Rakoczy March*. There is also a Berlioz overture called *Roman Carnival*.

But the most avid composer of program music was certainly Franz Liszt. His piano pieces include (besides the familiar *Liebestraum*) a *Dance of the Gnomes*, a *Mephisto Waltz*, *Waldesrauschen (Murmuring Woods)*, *St. Francis Preaching to the Birds*, *St. Francis Walking on the Waves*, etc. Liszt actually created the so-called "symphonic poem," a form of orchestral program music that has achieved permanent popularity. The best known titles are *Tasso* and *Les Preludes*, the latter inspired by one of Lamartine's *Poetic Meditations*, dealing with life as a series of preludes to "that unknown song, whose first solemn note is sounded by death." There

are also two programmatic symphonies by Franz Liszt, to which the composer gave the names of *Dante* and *Faust*, both aided by choral passages.

Wagner treated the universal *Faust* story in a concert overture, but it is in the orchestral introductions to his operas that he really proves his mastery of program music. The overtures to *Rienzi* and *The Flying Dutchman* are still heard on concert programs, even though the operas themselves are seldom performed. The prelude to *Lohengrin* is an ethereal tone picture, and this opera also contains an instrumental introduction to the third act, vividly depicting a torch-light procession.

The popular *Tannhäuser* overture has already been mentioned, with its *Pilgrims' Chorus*, the Venusberg revels and other picturesque details. The prelude to *Die Meistersinger* is a gorgeous musical drama in itself, starting with the march of the Mastersingers and bringing in the *Prize Song* most effectively. The equally famous *Vorspiel* to *Tristan and Isolde* is a compelling ex-

pression of human love, while that of *Parsifal* deals just as convincingly with spiritual exaltation. Similar in spirit is the *Good Friday Spell* from the same opera, and there is a climax of simple domesticity in the charming measures of the *Siegfried Idyl*, written as a Christmas and birthday present for Wagner's wife, Cosima (daughter of Franz Liszt), in honor of their little son. *Siegfried's Rhine Journey*, an orchestral interlude in the final music-drama of the Ring cycle, is often played as a concert number, with imitations of horn-calls and bird-song.

The French Saint-Saëns specialized in program music, winning success with several tone poems, including the realistic *Danse Macabre*, in which one hears the stroke of midnight, the dancing of skeletons on tombstones while Death plays upon his fiddle (with a flat E string), and a reassuring cock-crow which finally sends the ghosts scurrying back into their graves. Far more cheerful is the Saint-Saëns *Carnival of the Animals*, containing not only the famous melody of

*The Swan*, played as a cello solo, but also musical descriptions of turtles, lions and even critics.

Debussy has made millions happy with his delightful *Children's Corner*, including the *Golliwogg's Cake-walk* (a French conception of rag-time), *Jimbo's Lullaby* (obviously referring to an elephant), *The Snow Is Dancing* and *The Little Shepherd*. His *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* contains unique beauties of the impressionistic type, based upon a poem by Mallarmé, and there is realism as well as beauty in such other orchestral works as *La Mer* (The Sea) and the *Nocturnes*, *Nuages* (Clouds) and *Fêtes* (Festivals). In his more serious piano music Debussy includes many picturesque titles, such as the now familiar *Clair de Lune* (Moonlight), *The Submerged Cathedral*, *Goldfish* and *Gardens in the Rain*.

Other French program music worth hearing must include *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Paul Dukas (superbly cartooned by Mickey Mouse in Walt Disney's *Fantasia*) and perhaps Ravel's

*Bolero* and *Mother Goose* and Honegger's musical suggestion of a locomotive, *Pacific 231*.

The Russian Tschaikowsky's three most popular symphonies are all programmatic to some extent, reaching a climax in the *Sixth*, which the composer called *Pathétique*. His Fantasy Overture, *Romeo and Juliet*, definitely tells the Shakespearean story in music, with its chief sentimental theme reappearing in the popular song, *Our Love*. Another Tschaikowsky tone poem of the narrative type is *Francesca da Rimini*, with a detailed program also in the popular *Nutcracker Suite*. The ballets, *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* deserve mention, along with such piano pieces as the *Troika* (imitated by Tin Pan Alley's *Horses*) and the Tschaikowsky *Humoresque*.

A list of Russian program music should include Rimsky-Korsakoff's great *Scheherazade*, as well as that brilliant miniature, *The Flight of the Bumblebee*, Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exposition* and *A Night on Bald Mountain*, Rach-

maninoff's *Island of the Dead* (based on a famous Böcklin painting), the Stravinsky ballets, particularly *Petrouschka* and *The Fire Bird*, and possibly Prokofieff's *Peter and the Wolf*, which has the advantage of a spoken narrative.

The Bohemian Smetana wrote a fine musical description of the Moldau River, and Carl Goldmark is remembered by a *Rustic Wedding* symphony, as well as the melodious overture, *Sakuntala*. Dvorak's *New World Symphony* may be given some programmatic significance, with still more in his *Carnival* overture and such little pieces as the familiar *Humoresque*.

Brahms composed absolute rather than program music, but did not hesitate to use college songs in his *Academic Festival* overture, besides turning the old ballad of *Edward* into an impressive piano piece. Cesar Franck wrote several tone poems of merit, and Gustav Mahler tried to make some of his symphonies programmatic, also resorting to actual words at times. George Gershwin's *An American in Paris* is an outstanding

piece of program music, with Aaron Copland representing contemporary American composition of this type with *El Salon Mexico* and such ballet music as *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring*.

A climax of program music may be found in the works of Richard Strauss, who far surpassed both Liszt and Saint-Saëns in his symphonic poems, particularly *Till Eulenspiegel*, a wonderful tonal story of the pranks of a medieval practical joker who outstripped even Hollywood in that respect, but was properly hanged for his efforts. *Don Juan* and *Ein Heldenleben* (A Hero's Life) are close to the standards of *Till Eulenspiegel*, with even more detailed programs, and this is true also of *Don Quixote*, *Tod und Verklärung* (Death and Transfiguration) and the somewhat involved *Also sprach Zarathustra* (Thus Spake Zarathustra). The *Heldenleben* is clearly autobiographical in its musical content, with themes representing both the composer and his wife, the bickering of his enemies (including

music critics), a brutally realistic battle scene with a sardonic military march, and a final scene of domestic tranquility, introducing quotations from other Strauss compositions. This is program music at its best, quite capable of holding its own in competition with any of the world's purely formal compositions. (A detailed study and analysis of all the more important music of the narrative and descriptive type may be found in this author's earlier book, *Great Program Music*, a sequel to *Great Symphonies*, which covered the masterpieces of absolute music.)



## VIII. FOLK- AND ART-SONG

The most obvious program music, of course, is that which includes words, leaving no doubt whatever as to the meaning of a composition. Such music may take the form of a single song, for one or more voices, or a sequence of vocal numbers strung together, perhaps with instrumental connecting links, as in an opera, an oratorio, a cantata, possibly even a music-drama of the Wagnerian type, in which the entire structure is more elaborate and closely knit than in any other style of vocal composition.

As already indicated, the principles of the simple song form are the basis of construction for most of the larger combinations of words and

music, including the elaborate technique of the sonata and the symphony. Song itself is therefore worthy of careful analysis and attentive listening, particularly as it offers the most direct and convincing appeal to the average ear, more easily grasped and enjoyed than even the most obvious instrumental program music. Any examples of vocal music, including all the songs of the world, owe a real debt to the related art of literature, and it is often difficult to decide whether the effect of such a composition is due primarily to the words or to the music. In its ideal form, a song is equally dependent upon both of these elements, and equal credit should therefore be given to the poet and to the composer. (Occasionally one finds the same creator performing both functions, as in the case of such popular song-writers as Stephen Foster, Irving Berlin and Cole Porter.)

There are definite distinctions between folk-song and the so-called art-song, the former representing the instinctive music of the people and

the latter the deliberate and carefully planned creations of trained and experienced composers. Folk-song (which broadly includes also the urban type of popular music) is valuable for its honesty, its directness and often for its melodic invention, which may be the result of an actual evolution through constant repetition with slight variations, a literal example of the survival of the fittest. Obviously such music must start with some definite individual, gradually arriving at communal significance, but a strict definition of folk-song would insist that this original creator be unknown. (It is true that the works of definite composers are often labelled as "folk music," but they should actually be considered merely as "folklike" compositions.)

Folk-song is inevitably strophic in form, the same tune serving for each stanza, no matter how much the meaning of the words may vary. This means that a successful folk-song must have a very good melody and should preferably be sung by people who can make that one melody express

many different things. Sometimes the words of different stanzas have to be fitted to the basic tune with considerable adaptation of syllables and accents, but if the fundamental melody is worth-while, such adaptation is amply justified.

Folk-song exposes the absurdity of arguing that any melodic progression of tones has a definite meaning all its own. The same tunes have been used with equal success not only for the different stanzas of one song, but for various other texts of entirely different kinds. Some of the finest hymns in the world were originally folk-songs, often with distinctly vulgar words.

A tune usually has a fairly definite character of seriousness or gaiety, depending somewhat on its major or minor mode and on the speed of its tempo. But beyond this the words are of tremendous importance in establishing the final effect of the music. Try the experiment of singing the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* in the dignified and spiritual style that befits the inspired poem by Julia Ward Howe. Then sing the earlier text of

*John Brown's Body* to the same tune. Finally try the Rotarian nonsense verses, *One grasshopper jumped right over the other grasshopper's back* (with a refrain of "They were only playing leap-frog," replacing the original "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah"), and compare the results. The basic tune is always the same (going back to a camp-meeting hymn, *Say, Brothers, Will You Meet Us?*) but the effects are entirely different, depending on the words.

It is not generally realized that the words of *The Star-spangled Banner*, by Francis Scott Key, were fitted to a tune (*To Anacreon in Heaven*) which served for more than thirty other texts, including such widely different material as the convivial original, a political song, *Adams and Liberty*, and the ribald *When Bibo Went Down to the Regions Below*. (Key himself had used the popular tune for an earlier song about Stephen Decatur.) *Fair Harvard* satisfactorily fits the tune of the old Irish love song, *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms* (originally *My*

*Lodging Is on the Cold Ground*); *Annie Lisle* has served as the melody of Cornell's *Far Above Cayuga's Waters* and more than a dozen other school and college songs, while *Hail, Pennsylvania* was originally the Russian Czarist anthem, with *Old Nassau* first sung to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne* and the ancient *Lauriger Horatius* appearing later as the German Christmas carol, *O Tannenbaum*, and the American *Maryland, My Maryland*.

Art-song is the reverse of folk-song in almost every way. Where folk-song establishes a melody, which may then be fitted with a variety of words, art-song begins with a definite poem, striving to fit it with music which will express every detail of its meaning. Often several composers have been inspired by the same poem, and the varying results are decidedly interesting. Goethe's *Nur Wer die Sehnsucht Kennt* (generally translated *None but the Lonely Heart*) is a good example, with no less than four different settings by Beethoven, six by Schubert and one

each by Tschaikowsky, Hugo Wolf and several other composers. Heinrich Heine and Rudyard Kipling are also popular poets with the serious songwriters of the world, such texts as *Du bist wie eine Blume* (Thou Art Like a Flower) and *The Road to Mandalay* serving again and again and arriving at quite different but sometimes equally successful musical results.

While an art-song may be strophic (although this type of setting is generally called "folk-like"), the technique of its form demands a more thorough and detailed following of the words. The Germans call this style "durch-komponiert," literally "composed throughout," as opposed to the simpler strophic or stanzaic form. The very nature of such composition implies a more elaborate, a more subtle, a more refined art, although perhaps with less obvious melodic appeal.

The great composers of art-song (and there have been many) were never satisfied to fit a poem with a merely conventional set of musical phrases corresponding to the accents of the text.

They insisted on a basic melody of independent value and form, fitting the mood and emotional content of the poem as well as its metrical outlines, and they built this up with a carefully wrought accompaniment, a subtle combination of keys and harmonies, and a delicate use of modulation that produced the effect of a new and complete work of art.

Some verses, such as the swinging rhythms of Kipling, practically sing themselves, and almost any kind of a tune would do, since the listeners are primarily interested in the words. It may almost be argued that some of the greatest and most familiar poems in literature are not well adapted to art-song, and have never been successfully set to music. On the other hand, a great many minor poems, some of them by distinctly minor poets, have resulted in exquisite songs, if only because the words did not overwhelm the music with their importance.

Composers of the German *Lied*, which remains the model of modern art-song, were well aware

of this, and did not hesitate to use text material of seemingly small importance, often by obscure poets of their personal acquaintance. The word *Lied* really means nothing more than "song," but it has become almost a technical term in music to describe the romantic, typically German style of songwriting, immortalized by Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Brahms, Hugo Wolf and Richard Strauss. A hearing of the outstanding songs of these composers is the best possible introduction to art-song in general, and it will be found that much of the finest songwriting of other countries (excepting of course the folk-songs themselves) is built upon the foundation of the *Lied*.

Franz Schubert is still considered by many authorities the greatest of all songwriters, partly because of his amazing productiveness (he turned out over 600 songs, in addition to a wealth of instrumental music, in his tragically short life of thirty-one years), partly because he was the first composer to give the art-song its proper importance, and partly because of the many and varied

manifestations of genius that are constantly evident in his work. It would be foolish to say that all of Schubert's songs were good, for this is decidedly not the case. He was not nearly critical enough of the texts he selected (it was said of him that he could set a bill-of-fare to music), and sometimes perhaps not sufficiently self-critical either. His friends accused him of working too fast, and being too often satisfied with a first draft of any composition, and since he was perhaps the most purely inspirational composer that ever lived, he rather resented this criticism.

A splendid introduction to art-song is Schubert's *Erlkönig* (The Erlking), written when the composer was only eighteen years old, to a poem by Goethe—one of the most dramatic pieces in the entire lyric literature of the world. The story is of a father riding through the forest at night, with a sick child in his arms. As the galloping accompaniment suggests the desperate ride, one hears the terrified voice of the child, the soothing tones of the father and the enticing and finally

threatening accents of the supernatural Erlking himself. When they arrive at the inn, the child is dead.

For more cheerful material, Schubert's two Shakespearean songs, *Hark, Hark, the Lark* and *Who Is Sylvia?*, can be recommended, especially as they can be effectively sung to the original English words. His *Ave Maria* (set to an excerpt from Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*) has become popular in instrumental as well as vocal form. Gradually the listener should discover also such gems as *Du bist die Ruh* (Thou Art My Rest), *Die Allmacht* (Omnipotence), *An die Musik* (To Music), the charming *Heidenröslein* (a folklike setting of Heine's poem about a wild rose), *The Wanderer, Death and the Maiden* and *The Trout* (both appearing also in instrumental versions) and the entire amazing cycles known as *Die schöne Müllerin* (The Beautiful Maid of the Mill) and *Winterreise* (A Winter Journey).

After Schubert, it is natural to progress to the

songs of Robert Schumann, many of which are more elaborate in form and perhaps even more romantic in content. He also has two famous cycles to his credit, *Dichterliebe* (The Poet's Love) and *Frauenliebe und Leben* (Woman's Love and Life), as well as the series known as *Myrthen*, which contains such masterpieces as the *Widmung* (Dedication), *Du bist wie eine Blume*, *Der Nussbaum* and *Die Lotosblume* (translated by the author in his collection of 55 *Art Songs*). Another great Schumann song is *The Two Grenadiers*, in which the melody of the *Mar-séillaise* is introduced to represent the loyalty of the French soldiers to Napoleon.

Brahms was a splendid songwriter, following in the footsteps of his friend Schumann. He could compose in the folk style, as evidenced by his familiar *Lullaby* and *Sandmännchen* (Little Sandman). But he also wrote deeply emotional songs like *Von Ewiger Liebe* (Of Eternal Love), *Die Mainacht* (May Night) and the two *Nightin-gale* numbers. *Feldeinsamkeit* (translated by the

author as "Alone in the Fields") is a subtle Nature study, full of calm repose. The Brahms *Minnelied* (Love Song) fully lives up to its title, and there is a similar ecstasy in *Meine Liebe ist grün*. Less emotional is *Wie bist du, meine Königin* (My Queen), with a true serenity appearing in *Meine Lieder* and *Wie Melodien* and a convincing nostalgia in *O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück* (Ah, if I But Knew the Way Back). There is simple and appealing melody in the Brahms *Erinnerung* (Remembrance) and the *Sapphic Ode*, with humor as well as tunefulness in the *Serenade* and its mocking counterpart, *Vergeblisches Ständchen* (The Vain Serenade), as well as the lively tribute to a blacksmith, *Der Schmied*.

Robert Franz stands between Schumann and Brahms, a composer of the diligent, meticulous type, who made a close study of the *Lied*, but chose to express himself mostly in the simplest fashion. It is as a melodist that he is chiefly remembered today, and most of his songs are so

direct in their appeal that almost anyone can sing them with considerable pleasure. He was careful to choose only such lyrics as were admirably adapted to musical interpretation, and his greatest successes were with short, comparatively obscure poems. The Franz *Widmung* (Dedication) is even better known than Schumann's (having served as a signature for John Charles Thomas on the air), and there is an irresistible romantic appeal in *Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen* (Out of My Great Sorrows) and *Es hat die Rose sich beklagt* (The Rose Complained).

Mendelssohn wrote some delightful songs, of which the most popular is *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges* (On Wings of Song), familiarized by radio and various instrumental transcriptions. Hugo Wolf went beyond all these songwriters in the complexity of his settings, evidently determined to make the *Lied* an important art form, but sometimes giving the impression of too studied and self-conscious a style. He is most immediately appealing in such comparatively sim-

ple songs as *Verborgenheit* (Secrecy), the *Ge-sang Weylas* ("My Native Land," in the author's translation) and *Das verlassene Mägdelein* (The Forsaken Maiden).

In Richard Strauss one finds another great songwriter, supplementing his abilities as an operatic and symphonic composer. His settings combine the melodic inspiration of a Schumann or a Brahms with the technique of a Hugo Wolf. *Morgen* (Tomorrow), with its independent melodies in the voice and the accompaniment, *Traum durch die Dämmerung* (Dream in the Twilight), *Allerseelen* (All Souls' Day) and *Zueignung* (Devotion) belong among the truly great songs of musical literature, and there are many others of similar stature, including the brilliant *Serenade* (with an incredibly difficult accompaniment), *Cäcilie* (also requiring a fine pianist) and the simpler *Du meines Herzens Krönelein* (Thou, My Heart's Little Crown) and *Die Nacht*.

Wagner wrote a beautiful art-song in his *Träume* (Dreams), a study for the love music of

*Tristan and Isolde*, and there are good examples of the form in the works of Gustav Mahler and Max Reger, whose *Mariae Wiegenlied* (Mary's Lullaby) has attained considerable popularity.

The Russians, Anton Rubinstein, Tschaikowsky and Rachmaninoff, all followed the style of the German *Lied*, without any real racial characteristics, the first being primarily identified with *Der Asra*, the second with *None But the Lonely Heart* and the third with *Lilacs* and *In Silent Night*. Moussorgsky wrote some powerful and original songs, like *The Flea* (a favorite with Chaliapin) and the lively *Hopak*, while Rimsky-Korsakoff is remembered for *The Nightingale and the Rose* and the popular *Song of India* (actually from the opera, *Sadko*).

Scandinavian composers have shown more nationalism in their songwriting, with Grieg heading the list by virtue of the familiar *I Love You, A Dream, a Boat Song (Im Kahne)* and perhaps the song of Solveig in *Peer Gynt*. Jensen, Svendsen, Kierulf, Palmgren and Sibelius are in the

same general class, although less known as song-writers.

Italy possesses a wealth of good folk-music, as well as many a popular song in the folk style (*Santa Lucia*, *O Sole Mio*, *Funiculi-Funicula*, etc.). But Italian art-song is best represented by such old-timers as the *Amarilli* of Caccini, Pergolesi's *Se tu m'ami* (If Thou Love Me) and Giordani's *Caro mio ben* (Dear Love of Mine).

France has produced some great composers of art-song, with a distinctive style that is quite different from that of the German *Lied*. Much of this material is impressionistic, rather vague in outline and melodically far from obvious. Debussy is easily the most important of the French songwriters and his work has a highly personal and distinctive quality, with pleasantly dissonant harmonies and a shimmering iridescence of tonal coloring. His best-known song is *Beau Soir* (Lovely Evening), but there are many others of greater significance, with words by such modern poets as Paul Verlaine and Pierre Louys.

Cesar Franck, Chausson, Duparc, Reynaldo Hahn (*L'Heure Exquise*) and Paladilhe (*Psyché*) are also members of the French impressionistic school, in which the American, Charles T. Griffes, and the Alsatian, Charles Martin Loeffler, might be included. Gounod, Massenet and Godard wrote in a more conventionally melodic style, the first adding an *Ave Maria* to a piano prelude by Bach, with responsibility also for the rather cloying *Sing, Smile, Slumber*. Massenet composed an equally sentimental *Elegy*, as well as the charming *Ouvre tes yeux bleus* (Open Your Blue Eyes), while Godard is credited with a *Chanson de Florian* and the popular *Berceuse* from *Jocelyn* (best known as a violin solo). Bizet's *Agnus Dei*, Lalo's *L'Esclave* and Delibes' *Les Filles de Cadix* are worth including in any list of French art-songs.

There are many English songwriters of merit, particularly those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Henry Purcell was one of the greatest, and his songs are still heard on concert

programs. The settings of Shakespeare's songs by Thomas Arne and Sir Henry Bishop are famous, and the latter also supplied the tune for America's *Home, Sweet Home*, with words by John Howard Payne. Sir Arthur Sullivan wrote some popular vocal melodies, including *The Lost Chord* and the hymn tune, *Onward, Christian Soldiers*.

It is generally agreed that America's outstanding songwriter was Stephen Foster, but his inspirations were all "folklike" and could hardly be classed as art-song. Actually he was just as much a popular composer as Irving Berlin or Cole Porter, all three sharing the gift of creating words and music simultaneously. More serious in character are the songs of Edward MacDowell, with *The Sea* and *Thy Beaming Eyes* perhaps the most popular. Even more widely sung are Ethelbert Nevin's *The Rosary* and *Mighty lak' a Rose*. Oley Speaks (*Sylvia* and *The Road to Mandalay*) and Charles Wakefield Cadman (*At Dawn-*

represent the dividing-line between popular music and art-song, with Carrie Jacobs Bond and Geoffrey O'Hara definitely on one side and John Alden Carpenter, Mrs. H. H. A. Beach (*The Year's at the Spring*), Wintter Watts and a number of others rather more seriously inclined.

If even a few of the great songs of the world are heard as often as possible, it will be a simple matter to apply their standards of beauty to others. Ask yourself these questions: Are the words worth setting to music? Does the music express their meaning? Does it avoid interfering with their natural accents? Does it have a melodic beauty of its own, regardless of the words? Is it carried out in a logical and satisfying form? Does the accompaniment enhance and enrich the melody instead of merely serving as a background or even a disturbing element? The art-song that successfully passes these tests is likely to be a good one.

In the field of folk-music the technical standards are not so high, although there may be even

greater demands upon intrinsic truth and beauty. When the conscious technique of art is conspicuously absent, the basic factors of rhythm and melody become all the more important. A folk-tune must possess a real element of human appeal to pass the test of time, and this is true also of the "folklike" materials of a trained composer. It is not a mere accident or coincidence that the great masters of art-music have so often turned to folk-song for a dependable melody.

Every country in the world has a definite folk-music of its own, yet a surprising number of elements will be found to be fairly common property. Even so limited a melodic pattern as the five-tone scale appears in the folk-music of almost every race. Strongly marked rhythm, simplicity of melody (but with a tendency toward embellishment), exaggerated tone color and the spirit of improvisation may be considered vital characteristics of folk-music all over the world.

Naturally one finds primitive folk-song em-

phasized in countries that still maintain a real peasantry, like Spain, Russia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the Balkans and parts of Italy and France. In Germany and the Scandinavian countries folk-music survives because of its originally strong foundation, and this is true also of England, Scotland and Ireland.

In the United States of America a great mass of true folk-music has gradually been discovered, although much of this represents importations or adaptations of foreign material. The music of the American Indians is now of little more than historical importance. But the Negro spirituals and secular songs have contributed enormously to the popular as well as the serious music of America, and these may properly be considered native materials, even though of African origin. The mountain music of the South came largely from British sources, and this applies also to many of the western cowboy songs. We have borrowed Creole, French-Canadian, Spanish, Scandinavian and even Oriental materi-

als, the melting-pot creating a brew that now has an actual American flavor. With it all one occasionally finds a piece of pure Americanism, like *The Arkansas Traveler* or *Frankie and Johnny* or *The Little Mohee* or *Peter Gray* or the songs written about such legendary figures as John Henry and Paul Bunyan.

It would be impossible even to mention all the outstanding folk-tunes of the world. They speak for themselves, and they are preserved not only in the memories of those who love them but in many a symphonic classic as well.

Folk-song belongs to the people, as its name implies. It represents the democracy of music, whereas art-song, along with most of the other conscious and deliberate creations in the literature of music, would inevitably seem to suggest the aristocracy of individual talent, training and technique.

A song is not necessarily good just because it is honest, simple and direct. But if it survives in spite of its simplicity, there must be some virtue

in it that is akin to the inspiration of genius. When such inspiration is combined with conscious musicianship, the result must be considered even more significant.

## IX. OPERA AND ORATORIO

It was inevitable that music should sooner or later try to combine its own natural elements with the popular trappings of not only words but action, costumes and scenery, in that heterogeneous form of art known as opera. Here is the extreme of program music, giving the listener as well as the composer every possible aid, even to the translation of the libretto where necessary. Whether all this artificial support actually aids in creating significant works of art is still an open question. It may well be argued that there is more importance in creating a mood or transferring an emotion through pure instrumental music than when words, costumes, scenery and action make the intention perfectly obvious.

Yet the sheer difficulty of combining all these elements effectively, plus the mere size and elaborateness of an operatic production, may be considered sufficiently weighty to give this form of art a significance beyond that of all other music. Certainly there can be no doubt of its appeal to audiences, and this appeal is constantly increasing, with the help of radio, records and the motion picture screen.

Opera is eternally confronted with the problem of how far the music may legitimately be sacrificed to dramatic realism and vice versa. If rhythm, melody and form are practically ignored in the insistence on projecting a piece of stage realism, the musical results cannot be considered particularly happy. On the other hand, if an opera sacrifices all claim to a convincing stage presentation by its insistence on purely musical values, nothing has really been accomplished that could not have been equally well done by the music alone.

The question of the language of opera cannot

be discussed here beyond the suggestion that it is idle to claim that a translation can have exactly the same effect as the original. Moreover, it has never been proved that a familiar language inevitably made the words of an opera intelligible, for this depends largely on the volume and quality of the orchestral accompaniment. Mozart's comparatively light orchestration seldom handicaps the singers, whereas the symphonic instrumentation of Wagner's music-dramas may easily overwhelm them, regardless of the language used.

In answer to the continued cry for "opera in English," it may be pointed out that there is plenty of such material available, but mostly in the lighter forms, to which the English language seems best adapted, with the works of Gilbert and Sullivan as shining examples. This is particularly true of operas or operettas dealing with modern scenes and characters. The composers of "grand opera" were generally careful to take their material from either the dim and distant

past or from legend and mythology, so that the unreality of the whole thing would be accepted as a matter of course. There is always the fundamental artificiality of operatic tradition in the fact that people are actually singing when they are supposed to be talking. American audiences have found this paradox particularly hard to accept, along with some other unconvincing details of the operatic stage. But their admiration for a difficult achievement, with a sincere love of melody and fairly obvious human emotions, would seem to have overcome all possible misgivings by this time.

There are a few operas which have succeeded in attaining an almost perfect balance between dramatic realism and musical value. One of these is Bizet's *Carmen*, unquestionably one of the most popular operas of all time and perhaps the best choice for an introduction to the form. It has an exciting and convincing plot, gorgeous tunes, like the *Habañera*, the *Seguidilla*, the *Flower Song* and that of the Toreador, and a series of

colorful stage pictures, with all the appeal of Spanish atmosphere and fascinating dances. The screen and Broadway stage have co-operated in making the music and action of *Carmen* familiar, but there is no evidence of saturation on the part of the public.

Verdi's *Aïda* shares with *Carmen* the place of honor at the top of the list of "perfect operas," irresistible in its combination of music and drama. The setting of ancient Egypt is even more remote than that of a fantastic Spain, and the story of true love, foiled by treachery and ending tragically, will always have its human appeal. *Aïda* literally "has everything," including pageantry, exotic dancing, beautiful solo melodies and stirring ensembles. The choral passages are magnificent, with an instrumental climax also in the famous *Triumphal March*. The opening tenor aria, *Celeste Aïda*, is indelibly associated with the great Caruso, and there are other solos of equal effect for the soprano heroine and even the contralto menace, the Princess Amneris.

Wagner's *Mastersingers of Nuremberg* (*Die Meistersinger*) has been called the greatest musical comedy of all time. While its music is far more elaborate than that of either *Carmen* or *Aida*, it is not difficult for the average listener. The medieval setting, with the picturesque characters of the tradesmen who developed a music of their own, makes an attractive background for the simple "boy meets girl" story, with a happy ending that is quite against most operatic traditions. The familiar *Prize Song* runs like a theme through the entire opera, first heard in the Prelude and finally leading to a great choral climax. The real hero of the opera, Hans Sachs, is one of the most lovable men in history or literature, and even the villain, Beckmesser, has a comic quality. There is abundant melody, from the sonorous *March of the Mastersingers* to the *Dance of the Apprentices*, while the orchestral and vocal effects are consistently impressive. Every opera-lover eventually discovers *Die Meistersinger*. There is nothing quite like it in all music.

After hearing those three masterpieces, the novice in the opera house should be ready for almost anything. He will unquestionably enjoy at least two of the works of Puccini, *La Bohème* meaning "Bohemia") and *Madam Butterfly*, based on the American play by David Belasco and John Luther Long. Both are off the beaten track as to settings and plot, the first presenting the loves and adventures of a group of carefree artists in the Parisian Latin Quarter and the second posing the problem of an American Naval officer, married to a Japanese child wife. Both operas are full of melody, without any sacrifice of realism, and their tragic stories are sufficiently convincing to draw real tears from the listener. Puccini's *Tosca* is perhaps greater than either of these popular operas, with its brutal drama expressed in compellingly beautiful music.

Verdi offers much operatic satisfaction in addition to the masterly *Aïda*. Such earlier works as *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* will never lose their appeal, and there is much fine

music in *La Forza del Destino* and *Un Ballo in Maschera*, overcoming a possible lack of dramatic conviction. The two operas of Verdi's old age, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, stand among the supreme works of musical art, doing full justice to their Shakespearean originals.

French opera is best approached by way of Gounod's *Faust*, a typically Gallic treatment of the universal story of old age yearning for a return to youth and achieving it by making a pact with the devil. No other operatic score contains so many catchy tunes, with high lights in the waltzes, the *Jewel Song*, the *Soldiers' Chorus*, Siebel's *Flower Song*, Valentine's aria, the love passages of the hero and heroine, and the climactic *Trio* of the prison scene. Gounod also composed an effective but less popular *Romeo and Juliet*, containing another famous waltz song.

Massenet's operas are full of charm, particularly his version of the *Manon* story. His *Thaïs* is more serious, but with a popular instrumental tune in the entr'acte *Meditation*. There is also a

Massenet *Herodiade*, remembered chiefly by the baritone aria, *Vision Fugitif*, and the soprano's *Il Est Doux*. The composer's masterpiece may well have been *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*, but it is seldom heard nowadays.

A list of French operas still in the general repertoire would necessarily include Charpentier's *Louise*, Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah*, the *Mignon* of Ambroise Thomas and perhaps Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, with a special place reserved for Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande*, unique in its demonstration of the possibilities of impressionism on the stage. A modern Italian opera of true genius is Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei Tre Re* (The Love of Three Kings).

Russian opera is headed by the gigantic *Boris Godounoff* of Moussorgsky, with a basso as protagonist and the chorus really playing the leading role. Borodin's *Prince Igor* and Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Coq d'Or* have enjoyed considerable popularity, with some good dances in the first and an effective coloratura air in the second.

Tschaikowsky's *Eugen Onegin* and *Pique Dame* (The Queen of Spades) are highly respected abroad, but have never quite caught the fancy of the American public.

Among other operas in the current repertoire are Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* (famous for its *Dance of the Hours*), Flotow's *Martha* (effective in English, with a popular tune in *The Last Rose of Summer* as well as *M'Appari*), Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, the perennial Christmas gift for children, Bellini's *Norma*, Donizetti's *Lucia* and *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Rossini's *Barber of Seville* (a sure-fire comedy), possibly Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* and Delibes' *Lakmé* and certainly the "Heavenly Twins," *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, both too well known to require comment.

But the climax is still to come. Mozart was actually the first composer to show the possibilities of opera, writing mostly in the Italian style and producing a wonderful synchronization of music and drama in such works as *Don Giovanni*,

*The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute*. Beethoven's *Fidelio* was a noble experiment, pointing to further possibilities without quite realizing its composer's intentions. Then came Weber, with his *Euryanthe*, *Freischütz* and *Oberon*, identified today chiefly by their overtures, but definitely pointing the way to Wagnerian music-drama.

It was Wagner who carried opera to its ultimate heights. His *Meistersinger* has been mentioned as the perfect musical comedy; *Tristan and Isolde* must be placed beside it as the greatest of all tragedies in music. Before producing those masterpieces, Wagner had made a deep impression with the more conventional *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. He reached the limits of human imagination in the stupendous *Ring of the Nibelung*, a cycle of four overwhelming music dramas, *Das Rheingold* (which he called merely a Prologue), *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. They are peopled with gods and supermen, strange creatures of old Norse mythol-

ogy, the magic of Valhalla and the mysteries of the Rhine. Musically these works are unique because of their successful use of the "Leitmotif," a system of melodic patterns or labels, by which various characters, places and even situations are identified. With such thematic material Wagner built a definitely symphonic score, making his orchestra more important than any of the singers on the stage. He tried to express deep, philosophical ideas and a new conception of the drama of gods and men. But his triumph was actually musical rather than dramatic or metaphysical. He wrote inspired melodies, based on familiar patterns but of complete individuality, and he developed them with equal inspiration and original craftsmanship.

Only one composer has proved able to carry on the Wagnerian style with adequate success—Richard Strauss. His *Rosenkavalier* ranks close to Wagner's *Meistersinger* as a musical comedy in the grand manner, and is actually more elaborate in its technique. In *Salome* and *Elektra* he

put unique horrors on the operatic stage and here also his technical resources are amazing. Beyond such demonstrations opera cannot and should not go.

The difference between opera and oratorio is that the latter is presented without the scenery, costumes or action of the stage and deals generally with a religious subject. The most famous of all oratorios is Handel's *Messiah*, which has become a Christmas ritual in most civilized countries. It contains arias, recitatives, choruses and instrumental passages, as in conventional opera, but with a far greater burden of responsibility on the music and the text, the latter derived from Biblical excerpts relating to the birth of Christ. The famous *Hallelujah Chorus* provides an impressive climax.

On the same exalted plane stands Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, actually more human and dramatic in its details. (It has occasionally been presented in operatic form, and conversely Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah* makes an excellent ora-

torio when deprived of the trappings of opera.)

Haydn wrote two charming works in oratorio style, *The Creation*, based upon Milton's *Paradise Lost* as well as the Book of Genesis, and *The Seasons*, whose text is from Thomson's poem of the same name. Beethoven used the oratorio form in his *Mount of Olives*, but created a far greater piece of religious music in the classic *Missa Solemnis*.

Still more significant in the field of sacred song are the masterpieces of Johann Sebastian Bach, the *Mass in B Minor* and the two *Passions* (*St. Matthew* and *St. John*). Most of the Bach Cantatas also hold a high place in the literature of sacred music, as does the same composer's *Christmas Oratorio*. In the same class is the Brahms *Requiem*, matched by another work of the same title by Verdi and one by Berlioz.

Among other important compositions in the categories of oratorio and cantata should be mentioned Cesar Franck's *Beatitudes*, Gounod's *Redemption*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, the Berlioz

*Damnation of Faust*, Elgar's *Dream of Geron-tius*, Mozart's *Requiem* and possibly Debussy's *Prodigal Son*.

In addition to such major examples of vocal music beyond the limits of the song form, there are many excellent choral compositions, as well as quartets (for male and mixed voices), trios, duets and other combinations. It would be impossible to list even a fair percentage of the titles, but a few should not be overlooked. There are, for instance, the attractive *Liebeslieder* of Brahms, written for mixed quartet and two pianos, and also his choral *Song of Triumph* and *Song of the Fates*. Dvorak wrote both a *Stabat Mater* and a *Requiem* and there is musical merit in Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, Wolf-Ferrari's *Vita Nuova*, Horatio Parker's *Hora Novissima* and the modern *Gurrelieder* of Schönberg.

Much of the concerted vocal music of the world is in the so-called "polyphonic" style (literally "many-voiced"). Vocal polyphony is illustrated in its simplest form by the common

diversion of singing rounds, which actually represent the strict canon form, each part singing the melody, overlapping in harmony with itself. From a simple round or canon to an elaborate vocal Fugue is a long step, but the basic principle is the same. As the title indicates, a Fugue suggests a “flight” of themes, literally chasing each other through various keys. There are vocal Fugues in most of the great sacred music, while the best instrumental examples may be found in the organ compositions of Bach and Cesar Franck. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* contains forty-eight Fugues, all in different keys, each with its own Prelude. There is a good Fugue in the Finale of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony*, and many other symphonic passages are in the “fugato” style, suggesting a fugal treatment of melodies without actually carrying out the form in all its complicated detail.

Polyphonic music as a whole preceded that of the homophonic or harmonic type. The former might be called “horizontal” music, because it

moves in horizontal lines, each representing an independently melodic part. Monodic or homophonic music is written vertically, each note of the melody having its own harmony (actual or implied), with no independence in the accompanying parts.

Up to the close of the sixteenth century all Europe was polyphonically minded. The motets of the church service and most of the material of the Mass showed the polyphonic form, while the madrigals, glees, catches and rounds of popular music emphasized polyphony to the utmost. Some of this music was nothing more than an exhibition of tricks, an intellectual feat, like an exalted crossword puzzle. But often it had artistic value and a surprising amount of melodic inspiration. It was only an occasional genius however, like Palestrina in sacred music, and Orlando di Lasso in secular, who succeeded in bending the pure polyphonic style to a really significant musical purpose. The polyphonic music of Bach, more than a century later, was :

very different matter, for by this time the importance of melody and harmony as such had been recognized. Bach definitely invented themes that would not only work polyphonically but also produce beautiful, dramatic and emotional results in the harmony and the tone color and the form of their combinations.

Even the simplest contrapuntal compositions of Bach are gems of thought and musical rightness. Listen to any of the little *Inventions* for the piano, written for his children, but worthy of the attention of a mature artist. (The most familiar is the one in F major, in two parts.) They are the best possible introduction to the counterpoint of Bach. ("Counterpoint" simply means a note for note or "point against point" harmonizing of independent melodies.)

Wagner succeeded in making a super-counterpoint out of entire harmonized passages and groups of instruments or voices, and today the freedom of such composition is practically without limit. The habit of part-singing, either poly-

phonically or for the mere pleasure of harmonizing, is a permanent phase of human nature, regardless of whether it is expressed in a barber-shop quartet, an amateur chorus or a solid professional performance. Great vocal music is worth making as well as hearing, alive or on records.



## X. ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

The further one advances in the art of enjoying music, the more one is likely to be convinced that it finds its highest expression in the symphonic form. No other type of music offers the opportunities for sublimity of invention, perfection of workmanship and the direct transference of abstract moods and emotions that are to be found in the symphony.

Bach composed his music before the symphonic form had been developed, but he instinctively followed its basic principles of statement, contrast and reminder in his greatest contributions to absolute music. Wagner, Verdi and other operatic composers wrote very little absolute

music as such, but balanced this shortcoming by the musical power and beauty of their dramatic works, often requiring no help whatever from the words and action. Chopin's unique devotion to the piano precluded any symphonic compositions on his part, but he used the sonata form with complete success, besides writing effective piano concertos with orchestral accompaniment. Debussy's art also was too highly specialized for strictly symphonic expression, yet his larger orchestral works have a formal and structural significance equal to that of a symphony, quite aside from their musical impressionism. Except for a few such composers, practically every important creator of music since the middle of the eighteenth century has written something in the symphonic form; and it is by their symphonies that the final standing of most of these composers is estimated.

Sonata form has already been discussed, and this applies not only to actual sonatas for solo instruments but to at least the first movement of a



again with the help of some popular adaptations. Cesar Franck's one symphony is also a frequent choice on request programs. The taste for Brahms is perhaps the most surprising development in the symphonic field. His *First Symphony* is now honestly popular, and the other three are definitely on the way to a similar success.

Mozart's three outstanding symphonies, in G minor, E-flat and C major (*Jupiter*) are frequently heard, with the first perhaps the favorite and rightly regarded as a perfect specimen of symphonic composition. The Haydn symphonies are the simplest and clearest of all, but may find it increasingly difficult to compete with more elaborate works of the romantic and modern school. Haydn's *Surprise Symphony* is still dependable material, and any listener should find pleasure also in the melodic charm and limpid clarity of such others as the *London*, *Clock* and *Military*. For the amusement of participants as well as hearers, the so-called *Toy Symphony* can be recommended.

Beethoven is the recognized master of the symphonic form, with all nine of his highly personal symphonies maintaining their place in the orchestral repertoire. The first and second are not far removed from the simplicities of Haydn and Mozart, but with the third (*Eroica*) Beethoven gave notice of a genius that must still be considered unique. (It contains, incidentally, one of the greatest funeral marches of all time.)

Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony* is something of a throw-back to his earlier style, but in the fifth he once more asserted the individuality of his inspiration and the courage of his convictions. The sixth is the now fairly familiar *Pastoral Symphony*, stylized by Walt Disney in *Fantasia*, with a definite program throughout, announced by the composer himself. The seventh has been called "the apotheosis of the dance" and it is truly full of captivating rhythms. Number eight once more suggests a leaning toward conventionality, but in the *Ninth Symphony* all conventions are ignored and all precedents shattered. It is

not only the choral Finale that makes this work almost unique in music. Rather is it the pioneering spirit of imaginative originality that runs all through it. The most attractive movement is probably the Scherzo, but there is brooding emotion and irresistible drama in the opening section, with a beautiful slow melody by way of contrast. Before the soloists and chorus go into Schiller's *Ode to Joy* in the Finale, there are highly realistic instrumental arguments as to what theme may prove worthy of this text. Several snatches of the earlier movements are tried and discarded, until at last the unaccompanied bass strings announce the melody that will carry the symphony to its triumphant close. Regardless of the mere volume of players and singers required to produce this huge work properly, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* remains a masterpiece that has well earned the adjective "unique."

Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* has an even more important companion in his final work of this type, in C major. Its "heavenly length" has

been emphasized, and while it is characteristically melodious, it reveals perhaps more solid scholarship and technique than one is accustomed to find in Schubert's music.

Robert Schumann wrote four symphonies, of which the first, generally called *Spring*, is probably the most popular. The second, in C major, is actually superior, while the third (*Rhenish*) and fourth are holding their own in the orchestral repertoire. The rather programmatic symphonies of Mendelssohn have been mentioned, the *Italian* and *Scotch* living up to their titles, while the *Reformation* introduces both the *Dresden Amen* (later used by Wagner in *Parsifal*) and Luther's hymn, *Ein' feste Burg* (A Mighty Fortress). The romantic symphonic works of Berlioz and Liszt, all definitely program music, also require no further discussion.

Dvorak's *New World Symphony* (no. 5) makes easy listening, especially for Americans, who should be interested in the composer's use of Negro spirituals and other folk material.

There is a direct echo of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* in the first movement, and the main theme of the Finale not only suggests the tune of *Peter Gray*, but transforms it into what may be considered a deliberate reminder of *Yankee Doodle*. The *Largo*, however, is purely Bohemian, even though the words of *Goin' Home* (by the white William Arms Fisher) have given it the reputation of an actual spiritual.

Gustav Mahler and Anton Bruckner, with nine symphonies apiece, are being treated with increasing respect by modern conductors, but still remain something of a problem to the average listener. Their technique is impressive, and it may be that repeated hearings will eventually create the conviction of inspiration.

Richard Strauss has won more success with his tone poems than his symphonies (although the *Domestica* once created a sensation by its musical jokes), and this is true also of the minor Russians, with the possible exception of Rachmaninoff, whose *Second Symphony* has become

increasingly popular, along with the piano concerto of the same number. The French D'Indy, Bizet and Saint-Saëns, the English Elgar and Vaughan Williams and the Russian Scriabine, Stravinsky and Shostakovitch have all written excellent symphonies, with the Finnish Sibelius still somewhat ahead of them in popular favor. American symphonic composition has been well represented by Henry Hadley of the old school and the modern Bloch, Copland, William Schuman, Roy Harris and Paul Creston among others.

The great symphonic composers have uniformly proved their ability to write equally important music in the smaller orchestral forms, including tone poems, overtures and concertos. Mozart really established the form of the concerto for violin or piano and gave it almost symphonic proportions. Beethoven went much further, with his *Violin Concerto* again a towering monument, flanked by several remarkable works for piano and orchestra, including the famous

*Emperor Concerto* (no. 5) and the fourth in G major.

Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A minor* is a classic of its kind, sharing the popularity of Grieg's, Tschaikowsky's and Rachmaninoff's works in the same form. The two by Brahms are even more significant, as is his matchless *Violin Concerto in D*. (Tschai-kowsky used the same key, as did Beethoven, to produce an equally popular *Violin Concerto*.) Mendelssohn created one of the world's favorite concertos for the violin, and also contributed interesting music for piano and orchestra in this form. Chopin's piano concertos have been mentioned, and there are minor violin concertos by Max Bruch, Glazounoff and Goldmark, with Sibelius, Prokofieff and William Walton representing the modern school. Bach wrote a fine concerto for two violins and Brahms has one for violin and cello, with orchestra. There are excellent concertos also with the cello as soloist, notably those of Schumann and Dvorak. Saint-Saëns likewise con-

tributed his share of concertos for various instruments, with orchestral accompaniment.

Many of these works may be considered as actual symphonies with featured solos, and it has already been made clear that some overtures and tone poems have the significance of miniature music-dramas, with a definite symphonic value as well. Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade* often takes the place of a symphony on concert programs, with the advantage of serving as both absolute and program music. So it all comes back to the proposition that a great composer can express himself with equal effect whether he is writing for a symphony orchestra or a solo instrument, for the opera house or for a single voice, with or without the help of words, action, scenery or costumes. It is the music itself that counts.



## XI. CHAMBER MUSIC

Absolute music can best be studied in the various forms of chamber music, so called because it demands only a limited number of instruments or voices, and can therefore be performed most effectively in a small room, as compared with the large auditorium needed for a symphony orchestra, a chorus or an opera. Many sincere lovers of music find its most perfect though not its most exciting expression in the instrumental forms of chamber music, particularly the string quartet.

Here is the combination of instruments that permits a fascinating use of rhythmic and melodic patterns, of four-part harmony and well-defined tonal coloring, and of an exquisite

refinement of form, including a sufficiently complicated polyphony. It is perhaps significant that only the greatest composers have written successful string quartets. The form is so clear, so mercilessly honest, that any slipshod workmanship is easily detected, and it is so completely an expression of absolute music that only the most genial melodic invention will pass muster with the intelligent listener.

It may be unfortunate that chamber music has developed the reputation of appealing to such rarely refined tastes, for as a result of this a great many people have pretended to like chamber music when it really bored them to tears. On the other hand, the sincere lovers of chamber music have always been plentiful, and too often the elect performers of such music have been unduly modest, and unnecessarily fearful of presenting it to the general public. (Chamber music is also a fascinating game for amateurs, but they should be warned to pursue it mostly for their own pleasure.

The term "chamber music" is an old one, and the smaller instrumental combinations were popular long before the symphony orchestra reached its perfection. Strictly speaking, vocal music by small groups of individual singers should also be classed as chamber music, but since such music is nowadays performed mostly in large concert halls, it is more practical to limit the term "chamber music" to the instrumental side.

Louis XIV maintained a "master of chamber music," and such early Italian composers as Peri and Caccini produced *cantate de camera*, using one voice and one instrument. There were so-called "sonatas" (but without sonata form) written both for the clavier and for string combinations. Purcell's *Golden Sonata* was for two violins and bass. Bach composed trios (using both flute and violin), but no quartets. His "concertos," however, contained sections written for small groups of solo instruments that might well be classed as chamber music, and even the com-

plete orchestra of Bach does not require the wide-open spaces of a concert hall.

Handel's trios and sonatas show something of the later sonata form. But it is Haydn who should be considered the real father of chamber music, and particularly of the string quartet. The first actual string quartets were written by Franz Richter, and the most prolific composer of chamber music was Boccherini, who wrote ninety-three quartets and one hundred twenty-five quintets (and is remembered today for one little Minuet.)

Haydn composed eighty-three string quartets, but his importance lies in his development of the form rather than in the mere number of his creations. His earliest experiments in this style were little more than violin solos, with accompaniments by a second violin, viola and cello. But he soon discovered the importance of a more equal balance among the four parts, and this principle was carried on to its logical climax by Mozart and Beethoven.

The Mozart quartets are full of his characteristic charm, and show several different styles, of which the earliest is decidedly Italian. The later quartets have real individuality, distinct independence of the four parts, and a deeply musical flow of ideas. Six of Mozart's finest quartets were dedicated to Haydn, who outlived the young genius and greatly admired his work. (Haydn was twenty-five years older than Mozart, but there was a warm friendship between them, a relationship almost like that of father and son.) Of these six quartets, the last, in C major, is perhaps the greatest, profound and impassioned in feeling, bold in its harmonies, and with a tender, slow melody that is Mozart at his very best.

The outstanding master of the string quartet (with only the modern Brahms as a real rival) was Beethoven. His very first quartet (op. 18, no. 1) shows a new equality of the four parts, with one phrase distributed impartially among all the players. Later Beethoven developed the quartet form into something ethereal, unearthly,

hinting at musical conceptions which could not be expressed by any mere instrumental ensemble.

There were six quartets in Beethoven's earliest set. Eight years later he published a set of three (op. 59) dedicated to Count Rasumowsky, and still called by his name. (Rasumowsky was the Russian ambassador to the court at Vienna). An extraordinary development of style is shown in this second group, a broadening of technique to almost symphonic proportions. The quartets are all bold and vigorous in their treatment of highly individual melodic material, and the four instruments are used in a thoroughly polyphonic manner.

With op. 127 Beethoven began the final series of quartets, which have baffled most of their hearers and yet convinced the musical world that in the closing years of his life the deaf, unhappy composer had just begun to realize what music might be made to express.

After Beethoven there are no string quartets

of equal significance until Brahms. Spohr and Cherubini both wrote quartets, the former as many as thirty-five, but they are commonplace and without distinction. Schubert's quartets, written with less technical skill, are nevertheless far more interesting.

The best known of the Schubert quartets is that in D minor, whose slow movement is a set of variations on the beautiful melody of the song, *Death and the Maiden*. But his greatest quartet is probably the one in G major, written near the end of his short life. It is not polyphonic, in the manner of Beethoven's quartets, for Schubert did not lean toward this type of composition. But it has a warmth and a fullness of harmony, a rich glow of spontaneity, such as one inevitably associates with Schubert alone.

Mendelssohn wrote six quartets, all elegant in form, correct in every detail, but in no sense inspired. Schumann accomplished more interesting things with the quartet form, although obviously working through a strange medium. He

wrote three, dedicating them to Mendelssohn, and the last, in A, is worthy of his best creative style. They all have an individuality of both melody and harmony, but musically they are affected by their composer's absorption in the piano, which he knew far better than any other instrument. Yet it is easy to feel that Schumann, like Beethoven, selected the quartet form for thoughts that were too subtle for clear expression in musical terms.

Brahms, in his three quartets and other chamber music, suggests once more a combination of the best features of Schumann and Beethoven, although he does not seem to strive for the expression of "unfathomable mysteries" such as are found in the last of the Beethoven quartets. But there is the same breadth of style that characterizes the Rasumowsky quartets, the same ability to put symphonic material into smaller and more intimate forms, and a melodic invention which, if not completely original, is at least always individual. To the classic qualities of Beethoven,

Brahms adds the lyric romanticism of Schumann, and the combination is highly satisfying. He has in common with the great songwriter also a command of tricky rhythms, which provide endless fascination in all his works.

One of the recognized masterpieces of chamber music is the great quartet in D minor by Cesar Franck. It was a mature composition, written after a careful study of the earlier quartet-writers, but, like so much of his work, built upon the polyphonic ideas of Bach, with whom Franck was in close sympathy, because of their common interest in the organ.

There are two fine quartets by Vincent D'Indy, a pupil of Franck, but the outstanding examples of the modern French school of chamber music are the quartets of Debussy and Ravel. Both have in common the ability to accomplish much with an extreme economy of material, and both are harmonically in advance of even Cesar Franck. Debussy develops all four movements of his quartet on a single phrase, consisting of two

motifs. There is no clear outline of melody, and no easily recognizable form of the classic type yet everything is orderly in the highest sense and the close-knit quality of the instrumental fabric becomes more and more apparent, even to the inexperienced listener.

Ravel's quartet is a bit more conventional, but perhaps on that account easier for the listener. It shows Debussy's tendency toward economy of materials, with fairly clear references to its opening melody in the later movements, but it also comes close to the polyphonic style of the classical composers. In its harmonies the Ravel quartet is continually interesting, but not too heretical. Altogether, it is one of the most appealing examples of modern music, which is growing steadily in the affections of the public.

Modernism gets a real hearing in the D minor quartet (op. 7) of Arnold Schönberg, played without a break between movements, and lasting nearly an hour. Its discords were once considered quite terrific, but the human ear has accus-

tomed itself to far more extreme cacophonies since then. Actually, this entire quartet represents one huge movement, in what is no more than an elaboration of the old sonata form. With its heretical ideas of harmony, and its inexhaustible command of technique, it affords a fine mental exercise for anyone who likes to absorb music through the brain rather than the heart.

There have been interesting quartets by Bela Bartok, Kodaly and other quite modern composers, but it is well to become thoroughly acquainted with the established literature of chamber music before attempting too many experiments. For preliminary experience there are plenty of quartets of a far more obvious appeal than the best of the classic works, and some of these have a solid musical value in addition to their immediate attractiveness.

Notable among these pieces of chamber music is Tschaikowsky's quartet in D (op. 11) which contains the familiar *Andante Cantabile*, often played by itself on concert programs, and tran-

scribed for other instrumental combinations. The same composer wrote two other quartets, mostly in the classic style, yet with a distinct flavor of romanticism, and full of the endearing sentimentalities that one encounters in so much of his music.

The Norwegian Grieg wrote a most charming quartet, although without much relationship to the accepted forms. One movement, a *Romance*, consists of a characteristically appealing melody, and, like the Tschaikowsky *Andante Cantabile*, is often played as a separate piece.

Smetana put some of the nationalism of Bohemia into his autobiographical quartet, *Aus meinem Leben* (From my Life), and this ranks with the finer things of chamber music. Dvorak produced several splendid quartets, of which the most interesting is one in F (op. 96), generally called *American*, and written in this country in 1893. It is closely related to his *New World Symphony* in manner and materials, using themes which were unquestionably influenced by

the Negro spirituals, if not actually borrowed from that source.

Outside of the string quartet, chamber music contains other four-part combinations, as well as trios, quintets, sextets, and even an occasional septet or octet. Beyond this limit, any instrumental combination may be regarded as a miniature orchestra, and the "Little Symphonies," Chamber Music Societies and other small ensembles are becoming increasingly popular in concert halls of modest size.

The conventional trio is a combination of piano, violin and cello, with the emphasis usually on the piano. The Bach sonatas for flute, violin and bass, or two violins and bass are really trios, and contain some beautiful music. Handel wrote excellent trios for strings, as well as one for oboe, violin and viola. Haydn's string trios are rather thin, but he wrote one for the interesting combination of two flutes and a cello.

The early piano trios are little more than piano solos, with the violin doubling the melody

and the cello supporting the bass. It was in this style that Haydn wrote most of his trios and they have little significance as chamber music, although the form and melodic content are interesting. The popular *Gypsy Rondo* has been mentioned as a clear example of that form, but it is curious that even in this rapid movement Haydn forced the violin and the piano melody to play in unison.

Mozart's eight piano trios are far better balanced, and full of characteristic grace and charm. Although musically not particularly important, they represent a real advance toward the later established trio style. Beethoven also wrote eight trios of the conventional type, three of which appeared as op. 1, showing no advance over the work of Mozart. But three others, published as op. 70 (two trios) and op. 97, are a very different story, fully worthy of the mature Beethoven at his best.

Schubert's two trios are full of melodic inspiration, but do not add anything significant to

the form as a whole. Nor can the charming trios of Mendelssohn be considered particularly important, except in so far as they provide attractive and readily playable material for amateurs. Spohr and Schumann also contributed trios to the literature of chamber music, the latter displaying the romantic and poetic qualities usually to be found in his work.

Once more, however, it is Brahms who supplies the final touch of genius to an established form of chamber music, and his three trios (op. 8, op. 87, and op. 101) are the recognized masterpieces of their kind. More than any other composer he has succeeded in giving equal importance to all three parts, paying particular attention to the hitherto neglected cello, whose low tones are admirably adapted to the instinctive melodic line of Brahms, which leans toward somber effects. Nobility and dignity of style are to be found in all of these trios, and in addition to the value of their musical content they represent the perfection of form, so far as the combination

of piano, violin and cello is concerned. Brahms also wrote a trio for the French horn, violin and piano, and one for the clarinet, cello and piano, in both of which the high level of his chamber music is sustained.

The quintet has become a popular form of chamber music, either with or without piano. There are three quintets, written for the regular string quartet and piano, that stand out beyond all other music in that form. Their composers are Schumann, Cesar Franck and Brahms. The first is perhaps the most lucid and therefore the most immediately attractive; the second is the most original in its harmonic treatment (although it often suggests the same composer's violin sonata); the third is the most vigorous and the most solidly musical. All three are tremendously worth hearing, not once but many times. Dvorak also has to his credit a splendid piano quintet, with effective use of Bohemian dance forms, and there is a good one of more modern date by Dohnanyi.

In listening to chamber music, keep in mind the following principles: There should be as much independence as possible among the instruments concerned, with a natural polyphony arising from their related parts; the form should be clear in its general outlines, but with sufficient elaboration of detail to avoid monotony; the melodic invention should be definitely appealing, with enough character and individuality to make up for a lack of volume or versatile instrumental coloring. The greatest chamber music consistently lives up to these simple standards of excellence.

The music of the pianoforte (conveniently shortened to "piano" in modern usage) could fairly be included with chamber music, for even the highly developed instruments of today, with their almost orchestral effects of tone, are heard most satisfactorily in comparatively small concert halls, or even in a living-room of adequate size. Whether in public performance or in the home, the piano remains the most significant of

all musical instruments, with only the pipe-organ as a rival in versatility (and the latter is almost automatically limited to the audiences in churches and motion picture theatres). The piano still occupies a practically unique position as the basis for musical composition, for the study of notes and harmony and as an accompaniment for other instruments, in addition to its own important place as a soloist. It is universally recognized as the most practical of all musical instruments and the best possible medium for the study of music from any angle.

Some of the piano music heard today was originally written for such ancestors as the harpsichord or clavichord or even for the organ. This is true of most of the so-called piano compositions of the great Bach, as well as the Scarlattis, Rameau and Couperin, of an earlier day. Even Mozart used the harpsichord in preference to the light-toned pianos of his day, and it was only when Beethoven began to write his highly dramatic and romantic sonatas that the piano-makers

were forced to develop something comparable to the powerful and expressive instruments of to-day.

Weber, Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn all contributed to the potential expressiveness of the piano, but it remained for Chopin to realize its possibilities to the fullest extent. Liszt made greater demands on the instrument from the standpoint of brilliant technique, but Chopin may be considered the most truly "pianistic" of all the composers. His musical invention was also vastly superior to that of Liszt.

The smaller compositions of Chopin are still the best introduction to the music of the piano and many of them can be played quite acceptably by amateurs. The *Preludes* are a good starting-point, with several now in the popular class, and most of the waltzes make easy listening even for untrained ears. After that, one can gradually assimilate the charming *Mazurkas*, the more dramatic *Polonaises*, the brilliant *Etudes* (which are far more than mere finger-exercises),

the melodious *Nocturnes*, the romantic *Ballades*, the *Scherzos* (again much more important than their title would indicate) and eventually the *Sonatas* (one of which contains the familiar *Funeral March*) and the two *Concertos* already mentioned.

Franz Liszt, a spectacular master of the keyboard, naturally created effects of the sort that he himself could best interpret and also proved himself adept at arranging for the piano what other composers had originally composed in a different form. He is perhaps best remembered today for his *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, built from his native folk-music (the second is easily the most popular), but he has to his credit an interesting *Sonata in B minor* and two fairly well known Concertos, besides such smaller pieces as the familiar *Liebestraum* and a series of "transcendental" *Etudes*. Liszt's elaborate transcriptions and paraphrases of the works of Schubert and Verdi were definitely helpful to those composers, even though they are seldom heard today.

Another brilliant pianist, Anton Rubinstein, wrote five Piano Concertos but is now known almost entirely by the sugary *Melody in F* (a favorite with old-fashioned amateurs) and the programmatic *Kammenoi-Ostrow*. The piano music of Tschaikowsky and Rachmaninoff has been mentioned, to which should be added the work of the modern Russian, Prokofieff. (His *March* from *The Love of Three Oranges* makes an attractive piano piece, as does the satirical *Polka* from the *Golden Age* of Shostakovitch.)

Debussy remains the outstanding French composer of piano music, and his short pieces may well serve as an introduction to the whole modern school. Ravel belongs on practically the same level, with real individuality in his short compositions, which are mostly programmatic.

Grieg upholds Scandinavian nationalism in his music for the piano as well as in other forms, while Albeniz and DeFalla have performed a similar service to the characteristic rhythms and melodies of Spain. American piano music has

## 12 THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC

shown little racial distinction (except perhaps or that of George Gershwin), but charming little pieces were written by MacDowell (*Wood-and Sketches*, etc.) and some contemporary Americans have at least contributed interesting experiments to the literature of the keyboard.

Brahms has gradually become recognized as a genial composer for the piano, with his melodic and well written Waltzes, Intermezzi, Rhapsodies, Ballades and Sonatas, worthy successors to the best of Schumann and Chopin. (His *Second Piano Concerto* is definitely one of the world's masterpieces.) There is good piano music also by such widely different creators as Cesar Franck, Percy Grainger, Scriabine, Poulenc, Satie, Sinding and Lecuona, most of which belongs legitimately to the literature of chamber music.

Solo pieces for the violin (with piano accompaniment) may also be included in this category, serving as practical preliminaries to the small instrumental ensembles and eventually creating

an interest in the full symphony orchestra. (Actually the splendid records available today have encouraged many a listener to plunge directly into the symphonic literature itself.)

Mozart and Beethoven both wrote a number of excellent Violin Sonatas, the latter's most famous work of this type being the so-called *Kreutzer Sonata*, which has none of the tragic significance attributed to it by Tolstoy but derives its name merely from the dedication to Rodolphe Kreutzer, a leading virtuoso of Beethoven's time. Two *Romances* for violin and orchestra are also in the Beethoven list, flanking his great Concerto.

Brahms likewise supplemented a great Violin Concerto with Sonatas of equal value in their field, one of which begins with a melody frankly reminiscent of the Wagner *Prize Song*. Schubert and Schumann both wrote smaller works for the violin, but Mendelssohn concentrated on a single masterpiece, as did Tschaikowsky, both of their Concertos now ranking among the most popular

of all time. Saint-Saëns wrote three Violin Concertos, but is better known today by an *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* and a colorful *Habanaise*.

Some of the outstanding virtuosos of the violin naturally composed music for that instrument, but it is generally of technical rather than musical significance. The world-famous Paganini, whose tricks gave him the reputation of being in league with the devil, wrote a set of twenty-four unaccompanied Caprices for the violin, one of which, *La Campanella*, became popular in a piano version by Liszt, while another served as the theme for a series of Brahms variations. (He also composed two Concertos and a brilliant *Witches' Dance*.) Sarasate, Wieniawski, Vieux-temps and Joachim all produced violinistic show-pieces, of which they themselves were the best interpreters.

Grieg wrote three excellent Violin Sonatas, one of which has become a favorite in the repertoire of Jascha Heifetz. But the most original and in-

teresting of all the sonatas for the violin is that of Cesar Franck, which makes even greater demands on the pianist than on the violinist. Every movement is highly individual, with the Finale mostly in strict canon style. It has long been favored by such serious interpreters as Jacques Thibaud and Harold Bauer, the most recent recording team being Francescatti and Casadesus.

Compared with the violin, the literature of the cello is exceedingly limited. The leading concertos have been mentioned, and there are good Cello Sonatas by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Grieg and other composers. (Bloch's *Schelomo* is a modern masterpiece for cello and orchestra.) Small show-pieces by such cello virtuosos as Popper and Goltermann are occasionally heard, along with a popular set of *Variations on a Rococo Theme* by Tschaikowsky and the perennial *Swan* of Saint-Saëns. But the cello is still most significant as the bass of the string quartet.

The viola also finds its importance as a voice

in the instrumental ensemble rather than as an individual soloist. Schumann and Joachim both produced some minor compositions for the viola and the modern repertoire includes a prize-winning Suite by Ernest Bloch and effective pieces by Hindemith, who is himself a virtuoso of the viola.

The wind-instruments are likewise more valuable in ensemble than as soloists, although they are often given important solo melodies in symphonies and operas as well as smaller instrumental combinations. To the classic Flute Sonatas of Bach one might add such modern music as Debussy's unaccompanied *Syrinx* and some interesting material by the Americans, Charles T. Griffes, Arthur Foote and Kent Kennan.

Brahms wrote two Clarinet Sonatas for his friend Mühlfeld, to which Debussy added a *Rhapsody*, sometimes played on the saxophone. There are solos for the oboe and bassoon, as well as the French horn and the conventional brass instruments. (Trumpeters, cornettists and trom-

bonists are particularly fond of playing variations on hackneyed tunes.)

Today there are numerous compositions for small groups of wind-instruments which can be rightly classed as chamber music. For a popular style, with sufficiently modern touches, the creations of Alec Wilder for wood-wind octet and harpsichord can be recommended. The best American jazz is also played by small groups of wind-instruments, plus piano, string bass and drums, in the pure New Orleans style.

This again emphasizes the comparative insignificance of mere volume in music of all kinds. The commercial swing bands make more noise than an improvising ensemble of five or six experts, but their music is not necessarily better. Similarly a string quartet may produce music of more significance than that of a symphony orchestra, depending upon the inspirational quality and the technical resources of the composers concerned. Even soloists, both vocal and instrumental, may hold their own in com-

petition with more sonorous and numerically impressive groups, and here the human element, expressed through an individual personality, may play an important part in the final effect upon the listener. There is a certain megalomania that attaches importance to size for its own sake. This definitely does not apply to music.

## XII. VARIOUS CONCLUSIONS

It is impossible to develop the art of enjoying music by merely reading books about it. The one absolute necessity is to hear plenty of music of all kinds and thus to get the habit of forming one's own opinions. If those opinions keep changing, so much the better. It probably means that a definite improvement in taste is taking place. (In many cases musical taste could not possibly go backward, and it certainly does not stand still; so it is almost bound to go forward.)

If a piece of music sounds dull and uninteresting at a first hearing, don't give it up on that account, particularly if it happens to be a piece in which thousands of others have found honest enjoyment. The fact that its beauties are not of

the obvious type is quite likely to be in its favor. Conversely, one should not be carried away by a favorable first impression. Music that follows the line of least resistance may be temporarily popular but is not necessarily good on that account. If your enthusiasm for a composition suddenly begins to wane, don't reproach yourself for being so easily satiated. The chances are that the music was not worth much more than passing attention in any case.

The one and only dependable test of greatness in music is the test of time. That is why it is so futile to spend a lot of energy in worrying over present and future standards. Nobody living is qualified to say what is good or bad in the untried music of the moment or what will be recognized as good or bad in the future. All that anyone can express is a sincere personal opinion, and this is the privilege of the layman as well as the professional critic or artist.

In keeping this book to a pocket size, the author has deliberately emphasized material that

is likely to appeal to every taste, having confidence in the inherently good instincts of intelligent people to discover in time what has a lasting value and trusting also in the fundamental qualities of truth and beauty in music that has established such permanence. In every case, however, the further possibilities of independent discovery are definitely suggested, and every composition thus mentioned is available on records and likely to appear occasionally on radio programs.

The primary object of this book, in its original as well as its current form, is to create listening habits for average human beings. The limitations of space have made it impossible to go into much detail in analyzing actual compositions, but the general approach to music suggested in the earlier chapters, listening for patterns of rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color and form, can be applied even to unfamiliar material and should prove entirely practical.

It is impossible to say just why one pattern has

more human appeal than another. Unquestionably it is partly a matter of habit and association; but unquestionably also there are certain patterns, at least of rhythm, melody and harmony, which rest upon universal laws and formulas, recognizable, consciously or unconsciously, by all human beings. The mere element of comfort may enter into these patterns, as in other arts. We like lines and colors that do not annoy or hurt the eye. Similarly, we like rhythms, melodies and harmonies that do not assault the ear with too unexpected or illogical combinations of sound. It is true that the human ear can be trained to accept more and more dissonance, cacophony and actual distortion of the conventions of music (which is the basis of both ultramodernism and jazz), but there is surely a limit beyond which the average listener cannot be asked to go. The old argument that every original composer was considered a heretic in his day cannot be endlessly applied, nor is it good logic to claim that because a modernist is criticized,

as Beethoven was, he must therefore be the same kind of genius.

In the definition of music as “the organization of sound toward beauty” the last word is the most important. But to define “beauty” has always been a difficult if not impossible task. John Keats offered a poetic definition when he wrote “Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know.” But then comes the question “What is Truth?” which has never been satisfactorily answered. About all one can say is that beauty and truth alike rest with the individual. “If it be not so to me, what care I how fair it be?” If enough people, over a period of years, respond to the same piece of music in the same way and say, spontaneously and directly, “That is beautiful,” the chances are that it will go into the records as a “classic,” i.e. an example of permanent beauty. There is a certain satisfaction even in discovering that a piece of music, or any other work of art, is just as beautiful as you have always been told it was.

But beware of getting into the habit of thinking a thing is beautiful merely because you have been told so.

The ideal of every true artist is to express the abstract in concrete terms. In music, as in all other arts, the creative genius organizes his raw materials with all the means at his disposal, aiming to achieve a beauty that will be clear to any observer possessed of his five senses and a modicum of intelligence. Sometimes this public is not reached during the creator's lifetime. But if the work is really significant, the public inevitably becomes aware of it sooner or later.

The miracle of music is that it can transfer abstract moods and emotions to an audience without the help of words or pictures or symbols of any kind. When a really great piece of absolute music is heard, there is no mistaking its mood or emotional content.

The mysterious thing called inspiration is a quality that cannot be explained, but in the long run it is inescapable. It seldom appears as a sud-

den instinctive flash of creative power. Genius generally works slowly and painstakingly, with a knowledge of the ideal in view, but also a practical command of the means by which that ideal may be made a reality. Beethoven's notebooks, showing how slowly and carefully he developed the greatest of his melodic inspirations, are the best possible comment on this much misunderstood phase of art.

The direct pleasure that comes from the recognition of inspiration in a piece of music is something impossible to describe. Fritz Kreisler has given it the physical sensation of that tingling, shivering ecstasy commonly known as "goose-flesh," and he may be right when he says that only the music that produces that particular sensation is really worth while. Under any circumstances it is a compound emotion. Mere familiarity enters into it to some extent—the pleasure of being able to say to oneself (or perhaps to one's neighbor) "I know that," which also explains why people applaud at a concert when

they recognize the first measures of a familiar encore. They are not applauding the music or the artist; they are applauding themselves because they recognized the piece. But such harmless vanity is a necessary part of all aesthetic enjoyment. The fact that one responds again and again to the same musical stimulus in the same way makes each additional response all the more enjoyable.

The ability to experience this direct and perhaps wholly irresponsible pleasure and then to follow it up with the added pleasure of analysis, perhaps finding a logical reason for the earlier instinctive response, marks the real music-lover of the highest type. If the approach is analytical from the start, much of the spontaneous enjoyment of music may be missed. But if the mere sensuous, emotional comfort of the listener is the whole sum and substance of his enjoyment, then even more is being missed and there can be no possible claim to art on his or her part. A good music critic should get his impression of a per-

formance directly, without letting too many intellectual processes interfere with his spontaneous enjoyment. After that he should analyze his response at leisure and put his analysis into words that the average listener or reader can understand.

Music is so closely knit with the other arts that one could hardly get along without the other. Ruskin called architecture "frozen music," and the whole technique of form is certainly an architectural matter. Painting, sculpture and literature all have their analogies in music, and the art of the dance could not exist without music, which is its heart and soul. It was also at one time a necessity to the drama, and even today incidental music is helpful to the theatre, quite aside from definitely operatic productions. (If radio is to be considered art, its debt to music is of course unlimited.)

But the greatest significance of music is in its relation to life itself. It is unquestionably the most human of all the arts and the one that enters

most into everyday experience. It is unnecessary to repeat the hackneyed phrases that have been uttered so many times as to the necessity of music, its "universal language" or the uplifting value of a really fine composition. The fact remains, in spite of all the platitudinous utterances on the subject, that music does have an ethical, an emotional, often actually a physical effect on human beings; its importance cannot be ignored, even by those who would like to think of it merely as a luxury or an idle pastime. Religion has never been able to get along without music, and it is one of the greatest assets of the church today. Patriotism, loyalty, love, courage and all the other human virtues are not only expressed but stimulated by music.

If this little book has given the impression that all music can be reduced to simple patterns, remember that all human beings offer the same possibility. Everyone is composed of the same raw materials and everyone shows the same general patterns of form and feature. Yet there never

were two human beings exactly alike. In the same way there have never been two pieces of music exactly alike. They may show similar arrangements of notes, in both their rhythmic and their melodic patterns; they may use the same harmonies over and over again, the same tonal coloring, and the same outlines of form. But the effect of the individual composition will always be different from that of any other, just as people having the same eyes, noses, mouths and other features will nevertheless be easily recognized as individuals.

No matter how similar two people might be in their externals, there would still be marked emotional, mental and spiritual differences. The same variations hold good in music, where a composer's mental, emotional and spiritual character will inevitably affect his use of even the most ordinary materials. Therefore, it is the least of all tributes to say that a composer is completely original. Rather is it a compliment to say that he has used the simplest and most universal

materials in a manner that is distinctly and entirely his own.

No great composer ever worried much about the originality of his themes. Many of the Wagnerian motifs are in themselves quite commonplace combinations of tones. His genius consisted in knowing how to use them to create the exact mood and atmosphere that he desired. The hearer recognizes melodic inspiration, even when it does not imply a completely original arrangement of tones, which is literally impossible today, unless all the logic of tradition is cast aside.

After hearing enough music of all kinds, it becomes possible for anyone to decide, either at a first hearing or later, that a piece has inspirational individuality, or that it is merely another correct composition of a certain type, not necessarily bad, but also clearly of no particular merit. The same standards are being applied daily in the reading of books, magazines and newspapers. A piece of really fine writing does not escape the attention of the public any more

than a really fine piece of music escapes the experienced listener.

The art of enjoying music finds its greatest pleasure in the discovery of permanent beauty, regardless of whether the discovery has previously been made by others. Even if one's taste may later prove to have been wrong, the original enthusiasm was worth while, and it is far better to express a conviction sincerely than to play the cautious role of making sure that one's opinion is conventionally correct. The greater the experience in practical listening, the better will be the chances of arriving at unshakable conclusions, based upon deliberate analysis as well as instinctive reactions. When you have discovered for yourself something beautiful that proves to have passed the test of time, and to have stimulated thousands of others as it stimulates you, then you have enjoyed an experience that is akin to that of the creative artist himself, and, what is more, you have added definitely to the enduring satisfactions of life.

# INDEX

- Absolute Music, 6, 116–18, 191–2  
Accent, 21–4  
*Ach, du lieber Augustin*, 57  
Alto (contralto), 66, 78–80  
Alto horn, 75, 80  
*America*, 83–4, 57  
Art Song, 6, 135–58  
*Au Clair de la Lune*, 38, 101  
*Auld Lang Syne*, 57, 140
- Bach, Johann Sebastian, 27, 30, 42, 82, 88, 108, 113, 119, 172, 174, 176, 179, 188, 194, 199, 203, 208, 216; *Arioso*, 82; *Cantatas*, 172; *Capriccio*, 119–20; *Christmas Oratorio*, 172; *Concerto for Two Violins*, 42, 188; *Flute Sonatas*, 88, 216; *Gavottes*, 30; *Goldberg Variations*, 108; *Inventions*, 176; *Mass in B Minor*, 172; *Passions* (St. John and St. Matthew), 172; *Sarabande*, 27; *Sonatas (Trios)*, 203; *Suites*, 27; *Well-Tempered Clavier*, The, 174
- Ballet, 6, 116, 117, 124, 130, 131, 132
- Banjo, 70, 82, 86  
Barber Shop Harmony, 50, 58–60, 177
- Barnby, Joseph, 61; *Sweet and Low*, 61
- Bartok, Bela, 201; *String Quartet*, 201
- Bass, 66, 78, 80, 203
- Bassoon, 73–4, 79, 88, 216
- Bass-viol (double-bass), 75, 79, 84, 217
- Battle Hymn of the Republic*, 57, 138–9
- Beach, Mrs. H. H. A., 154; *Year's at the Spring*, The, 154
- Beethoven, Ludwig van, 28, 38, 39, 77, 83–4, 88–9, 90, 106, 107, 112, 113, 116, 120–3, 140, 169, 172, 181, 183–4, 187–8, 194, 195–6, 197, 198, 204, 208–9, 213, 215, 225; *Battle Symphony*, 121; *Cello Sonata*, 215; *Coriolanus Overture*, 122; *Dance of the Dervishes*, 120; *Egmont Overture*, 121; *Fidelio*, 38, 90, 122, 169; *Kreutzer Sonata*, 33, 107, 213; *Leonore Overture*

- No. 3, 38, 84, 90, 122; *Minuet in G*, 28; *Missa Solemnis*, 172; *Moonlight Sonata*, 122; *Mount of Olives, The*, 172; *Ode to Joy*, 83, 123, 184; *Piano Concertos*, 187-8; *Romances*, 213; *Rondo (Lost Penny)*, 121; *Ruins of Athens, The*, 120; *Sonata Appassionata*, 122; *Sonata in E Flat*, 122; *Sonata Pathétique*, 122; *String Quartets*, 195-8; *Symphony No. 1*, 183; *Symphony No. 2*, 39-40, 183; *Symphony No. 3 (Eroica)*, 89, 123, 183; *Symphony No. 4*, 183; *Symphony No. 5*, 33, 83, 84, 107, 112, 123, 181, 183; *Symphony No. 6 (Pastoral)*, 36, 89, 116, 122-3, 183; *Symphony No. 7*, 183; *Symphony No. 8*, 123, 183; *Symphony No. 9*, 83, 84, 123, 183-4; *Trios*, 204; *Turkish March*, 36, 120; *Variations (Diabelli)*, 108; *Violin Concerto*, 187, 213; *Violin Sonatas*, 213
- Bellini, Vincenzo, 168; *Norma*, 168
- Berlin, Irving, 36, 37, 40, 136, 153; *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, 39; *Always*, 40; *Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning*, 37; *Pack Up Your Sins*, 36
- Berlioz, Hector, 77, 84, 126, 172, 185; *Ballet of the Sylphs*, 126; *Damnation of Faust, The*, 126, 173; *Dance of the Will-o'-the Wisps*, 126; *Fantastic Symphony*, 126; *Harold in Italy (Symphony)*, 126; *Rakoczy March*, 126; *Requiem*, 172; *Roman Carnival Overture*, 126; *Romeo and Juliet*, 126
- Bishop, Sir Henry, 153; *Home, Sweet Home*, 52, 153
- Bizet, Georges, 27, 152, 162, 187; *Agnus Dei*, 152; *Carmen*, 27, 162-3, 164; *Flower Song*, 162; *Habanera*, 162; *Sequidilla*, 27, 162; *Toreador Song*, 162
- Bloch, Ernest, 187, 215, 216; *Schelomo*, 215; *Suite for Viola*, 216
- Blue Harmony, 58-9, 61
- Boccherini, Luigi, 28, 194; *Minuet*, 28, 194
- Borodin, Alexander, 167; *Prince Igor*, 167
- Brahms, Johannes, 36, 82, 88, 107, 113, 131, 143, 146-7, 149, 172, 173, 182, 188, 195, 197, 198-9, 205-6,

- 212, 213, 214, 216; *Academic Festival Overture*, 88, 131; *Ballades*, 212; *Clarinet Sonatas*, 216; *Double Concerto*, 188; *Edward (Ballade)*, 131; *Erinnerung*, 147; *Feldeinsamkeit*, 146-7; *Intermezzi*, 212; *Liebeslieder*, 173; *Lullaby (Wiegengesang)*, 36, 146; *Mainacht*, 146; *Meine Liebe ist grün*, 147; *Meine Lieder*, 147; *Minnelied*, 147; *O Wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück*, 147; *Nightingale (2 songs)*, 146; *Piano Concertos*, 188, 212; *Piano Sonatas*, 212; *Quintet*, 206; *Requiem*, 172; *Rhapsodies*, 212; *Sandmännchen*, 146; *Sapphic Ode*, 147; *Schmied, Der*, 147; *Serenade*, 147; *Song of the Fates*, 173; *Song of Triumph*, 173; *String Quartets*, 198-9; *Symphony No. 1*, 182; *Symphony No. 2*, 82, 182; *Symphony No. 3*, 182; *Symphony No. 4*, 107-8, 182; *Trios*, 205-6; *Variations*, 107, 214; *Vergebliches Ständchen*, 147; *Violin Concerto*, 188, 213; *Violin Sonatas*, 213; *Von Ewiger Liebe*, 146; *Wie bist du, meine Königin*, 147; *Wie Melodien*, 147; Bruch, Max, 188; *Violin Concertos*, 188; Bugle, 36-7, 56, 90; Caccini, Giulio, 151, 193; *Amarilli*, 151; Cadman, Charles Wakefield, 153; *At Dawning*, 153; *Land of the Sky-Blue Water, The*, 153-4; Canon, 52-3, 174; Cantata, 109, 135; Carmichael, Hoagy, 41; *Old Buttermilk Sky*, 41; Celesta, 70, 87, 92; Cello (violoncello), 75, 79, 82, 108, 109, 203-6, 215; Chamber music, 6, 191-218; Charpentier, Gustave, 167; *Louise*, 167; Cherubini, Luigi, 197; *String Quartets*, 197; Chopin, Frederic, 29, 32, 62, 125, 180, 188, 209-10, 212; *Ballades*, 210; *Butterfly Etude*, 125; *Etudes*, 209; *Funeral March*, 32, 210; *Heroic Polonaise (A-flat)*, 29, 125; *Mazurkas*, 29, 209; *Military Polonaise*, 29, 125; *Minute Waltz*, 125; *Nocturnes*, 210; *Piano Concertos*, 188,

- 210; *Polonaises*, 29, 209; *Preludes*, 62, 125, 209; *Revolutionary Etude*, 125; *Scherzos*, *Sonatas*, 210  
 Chord, 12, 44, 49, 55–63, 81  
 Chorus, 10, 177, 191  
 Clarinet, 8, 72–3, 74, 79, 80, 89–90, 109, 206  
 Clavichord, 71, 208  
 Cohan, George M., 37; *Over There*, 37  
 Concerto, 109, 187–9  
 Copland, Aaron, 132, 187; *Appalachian Spring*, 132; *Billy the Kid*, 132; *Rodeo*, 132; *Salon Mexico*, 132  
 Cor anglais, 73, 88, 89  
 Cornelius, Peter, 62; *Ein Ton (Monotone)*, 62  
 Cornet, 74, 80  
 Counterpoint, 53, 176  
 Cymbals, 80, 81  
  
*Daquin, L. Claude*, 36, 120;  
*Coucou, Le*, 36, 120  
 Debussy, Claude, 60, 77, 93, 129, 151, 167, 173, 180, 199–200, 211, 216; *Afternoon of a Faun*, 93, 129; *Beau Soir*, 151; *Clair de Lune*, 129; *Children's Corner*, 129; *Gardens in the Rain*, 129; *Golliwogg's Cake-Walk*, 129; *Goldfish*, 129; *Jimbo's Lullaby*, 129; *Little Shepherd*, 129; *Mer, La*, 129; *Nocturnes (Nuages, Fêtes)*, 129; *Pelléas and Mélisande*, 167; *Prodigal Son, The*, 173; *Rhapsody for Clarinet*, 216; *Snow Is Dancing, The*, 129; *String Quartet*, 199–200; *Submerged Cathedral, The*, 129; *Syrinx*, 216  
 Delibes, Leo, 152, 168; *Filles de Cadix, Les*, 152; *Lakmé*, 168  
 Development, 12, 99, 100, 104, 110, 112  
 D'Indy, Vincent, 187, 199; *String Quartets*, 199; *Symphonies*, 187  
 Discord, 50–1, 200–1  
 Disney, Walt, 91, 129, 183; *Fantasia*, 91, 129, 183  
*Dixie*, 38, 47, 52, 57  
 Dohnanyi, Erno, 206; *Quintet*, 206  
 Donizetti, Gaetano, 168; *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, 168  
 Drum, 8, 30, 66, 67, 69, 70, 80–1, 217  
*Du bist wie eine Blume*, 141  
 Dukas, Paul, 88, 129; *Sorcerer's Apprentice, The*, 88, 129  
 Dvorak, Anton, 33, 52, 89, 131, 173, 185–6, 188, 202–3, 206; *Carnival Overture*,

- 131; *Cello Concerto*, 188;  
*Humoresque*, 33, 52, 131;  
*Largo*, 186; *New World Symphony* (No. 5), 89, 131, 185-6, 202; *Quintet*, 206; *Requiem*, 173; *Stabat Mater*, 173; *String Quartet (American)*, 202-3
- Elgar, Edward, 26, 173, 187; *Dream of Gerontius, The*, 173; *Pomp and Circumstance*, 26
- English horn (See *Cor anglais*)
- Exposition, 99, 104, 110, 112
- Fanfare, 90, 110
- Fisher, William Arms, 186; *Goin' Home*, 89, 186
- Flotow, Friedrich, 168; *Last Rose of Summer, The*, 168; *M'Appari*, 168; *Martha*, 168
- Flute, 9, 50, 71, 72, 75, 79, 80, 87-8, 109, 203, 216
- Folk-music, 11, 13, 45, 96, 103, 110, 154-6
- Folk-song, 6, 41, 135-158
- Form, 10, 12, 15, 17, 95-114
- Foster, Stephen, 17, 39, 45, 52, 57, 98, 136, 153; *Old Folks at Home*, 39, 52
- Fox-trot, 23, 27
- Franck, Cesar, 89, 108, 131, 152, 172, 174, 182, 199, 206, 212, 215; *Beatiitudes, The*, 172; *Quintet*, 206; *String Quartet*, 199; *Symphonic Variations*, 108; *Symphony in D minor*, 89, 182; *Violin Sonata*, 215
- Franz, Robert, 143, 147-8; *Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen*, 148; *Es hat die Rose sich beklagt*, 148; *Widmung (Dedication)*, 148
- French horn, 74, 79-80, 90, 206, 216
- Frère Jacques (Are You Sleeping?)*, 31, 38, 52
- Fugue, 12, 116, 174
- Ganne, Louis, 29; *La Czaria*, 29; *Marche Lorraine*, 26
- Gershwin, George, 61, 77, 131, 132, 212; *American in Paris, An*, 77, 131-2; *Man I Love, The*, 61;
- Gilbert and Sullivan, 30, 161; *Gondoliers, The*, 30
- Giordani, Tommaso, 151; *Caro mio ben*, 151
- Glazounoff, Alexander, 188; *Violin Concerto*, 188
- Glee, 54, 175
- Gluck, C. W. von, 88; *Orpheus and Eurydice*, 88
- Godard, Benjamin, 43, 152;

- Berceuse (Jocelyn)*, 152; *Chanson de Florian*, 152; *Valse Chromatique*, 43  
*God Save the King*, 83-4, 121  
Goethe, J. Wolfgang, 140, 144  
Goldmark, Carl, 131, 188; *Rustic Wedding Symphony*, 131; *Sakuntala Overture*, 131; *Violin Concerto*, 188  
Gounod, Charles, 152, 166, 172; *Ave Maria*, 152; *Faust*, 166; *Flower Song*, 166; *Jewel Song*, 166; *Sing, Smile, Slumber*, 152; *Soldiers' Chorus*, 166; *Trio (Faust)*, 166; *Valentine's Aria*, 166; *Romeo and Juliet*, 166; *Waltz Song (Romeo and Juliet)*, 166; *Redemption, The*, 172  
Grever, Maria, 41; *Magic Is the Moonlight*, 41  
Grieg, Edvard, 150, 188, 202, 211, 214, 215; *Boat Song (Im Kahne)*, 150; *Dream, A (Ein Draum)*, 150; *I Love You (Ich liebe dich)*; 150; *Peer Gynt (Suite)*, 150; *Piano Concerto*, 188; *Romance*, 202; *Solveig's Song*, 150; *String Quartet*, 202; *Violin Sonatas*, 214  
Hahn, Reynaldo, 152; *L'Heure Exquise*, 152  
Handel, G. F., 39, 42, 107, 113, 120, 171, 194, 203; *Hallelujah Chorus*, 171; *Harmonious Blacksmith, The*, 120; *Joy to the World*, 42; *Largo*, 42; *Messiah, The*, 171; *Sonatas*, 194; *Trios*, 194, 203; *Xerxes*, 42  
Harmony, 2, 10, 12, 15, 17, 49-64, 65-6, 78, 81, 95, 96, 111  
Harp, 69, 70, 86, 87, 89  
Harpsichord, 71, 208, 217  
Havdn, Franz Josef, 28, 77, 106, 107, 113, 120, 172, 182, 183, 194-5; *Clock Symphony*, 182; *Creation, The*, 172; *Gypsy Rondo*, 106, 204; *London Symphony*, 182; *Military Symphony*, 182; *Minuets*, 28; *Poule, La*, 120; *Seasons, The*, 172; *String Quartets*, 194; *Surprise Symphony*, 31, 107, 182; *Toy Symphony*, 36, 182; *Trios*, 106, 203-4  
Heine, Heinrich, 141, 145  
Herbert, Victor, 26; *Kiss Me Again*, 26  
Homophonic (Monodic) Music, 53, 175

- Honegger, Arthur, 130; *Pacific* 231, 130
- Howe, Julia Ward, 138; *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, 57, 138-9
- Humperdinck, Engelbert, 36, 168; *Hansel and Gretel*, 36, 168
- Ippolitoff-Ivanoff, M. M., 83; *Caucasian Sketches*, 83; *In the Village*, 83
- Jazz, 75, 85, 217
- Joachim, Joseph, 214, 216
- Kern, Jerome, 61, 101; *All the Things You Are*, 61; *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, 101
- Kipling, Rudyard, 141, 142; *Road to Mandalay, The*, 141, 153
- Kodaly, Zoltan, 201; *String Quartet*, 201
- Lalo, Edouard, 152; *L'Esclave*, 152
- Lecuona, Ernesto, 212; *Piano Music*, 212
- Lehar, Franz, 26, 40; *Merry Widow Waltz*, 26, 40; *Vilia*, 40
- Leoncavallo, Ruggero, 168; *Pagliacci, I.*, 168
- Lied, 142-50
- Liszt, Franz, 41, 90, 116, 126-7, 132, 185, 209, 210, 214; *Campanella, La*, 214; *Dance of the Gnomes*, 126; *Dante (Symphony)*, 127; *Etudes ("Transcendental")*, 210; *Faust Symphony*, 127; *Hamlet*, 116; *Hungarian Fantasy*, 41; *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, 41, 210; *Liebestraum*, 115, 126, 210; *Mazepa*, 116; *Mephisto Waltz*, 126; *Piano Concertos*, 210; *Preludes, Les*, 126; *St. Francis Preaching to the Birds*, 126; *St. Francis Walking on the Waves*, 126; *Sonata in B Minor*, 210; *Tasso (Symphonic Poem)*, 126; *Transcriptions*, 210; *Walderdesrauschen (Murmuring Woods)*, 126
- Loeffler, Charles Martin, 152
- Longfellow, H. W., 22; *Psalm of Life*, 22
- Long, Long Ago, 32, 57
- Long, Long Trail, The, 37, 51-2
- Luther, Martin, 185; *Ein' Feste Burg*, 185
- MacDowell, Edward, 30, 212; *Polonaise*, 30; *Sea, The*, 153; *Thy Beaming Eyes*, 153; *Woodland Sketches*, 212

- Madrigal, 54, 175  
 Maelzel, J. N., 121, 123  
 Mahler, Gustav, 131, 150, 186  
*Malbrough (For He's a Jolly Good Fellow)*, 57, 121  
 Mandolin, 70, 82, 86  
 March, 12, 20, 23, 25-7, 93  
 Marimba, 70, 87  
*Marseillaise, La*, 37, 47, 146  
 Mascagni, Pietro, 168; *Cavalleria Rusticana*, 168  
 Massenet, Jules, 30, 152, 166-7; *Elegy*, 152; *Gavotte*, 30; *Herodiade*, 167; *Il Est Doux*, 167; *Jongleur de Notre Dame*, 167; *Manon*, 30, 166; *Méditation (Thaïs)*, 166; *Ouvre tes yeux bleus*, 152; *Thaïs*, 166; *Vision Fugitif*, 167  
 Mazurka, 29-30, 209  
 Melody, 2, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 22, 30-1, 35-47, 49, 60, 65-6, 78, 81, 95, 96, 98-9, 103, 111, 137-8  
 Mendelssohn, Felix (Bartholdy), 26, 40, 62, 106, 108, 124-5, 148, 176, 185, 188, 197-8, 205, 209, 213, 215; *Athalie*, 26; *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges (On Wings of Song)*, 148; *Calm Sea and a Prosperous Voyage*, 125; *Cello Sonata*, 215; *Confidence*, 124; *Consolation*, 124; *Elijah*, 62, 171; *Fingal's Cave Overture (The Hebrides)*, 125; *Italian Symphony*, 125, 185; *Lift Thine Eyes*, 62; *Lovely Melusina, The*, 125; *Midsummer Night's Dream, A (Overture, Nocturne, Scherzo, Wedding March)*, 125; *Piano Concertos*, 188; *Priests' March*, 26; *Reformation Symphony*, 125, 185; *Rondo Capriccioso*, 106; *Ruy Blas Overture*, 125; *Scotch Symphony*, 125, 185; *Songs without Words*, 40, 124; *Spinning Song*, 124; *Spring Song*, 124; *String Quartets*, 197-8; *Trios*, 205; *Variations Sérieuses*, 108; *Violin Concerto*, 188, 213  
 Meyerbeer, Giacomo, 26, 168; *L'Africaine*, 168; *Coronation March*, 26; *Prophet, The*, 26  
 Milton, John, 172; *Paradise Lost*, 172  
 Minuet, 27-8, 106, 108, 181  
 Modes, 53-4  
 Montemezzi, Italo, 167; *L'Amore dei Tre Re*, 167  
 Motion Picture Music, 117  
 Moussorgsky, Modeste, 29, 130, 150, 167; *Boris Go-*

- dounoff*, 29, 167; *Flea, The*, 150; *Hopak*, 150; *Night on Bald Mountain*, A, 130; *Pictures at an Exposition*, 130; *Polonaise*, 29
- Mozart, W. A., 28, 41, 77, 106, 112, 113, 120, 168–9, 174, 182, 183, 187, 194–5, 208, 213; *Concertos*, 187; *Don Giovanni*, 28, 168; *Jupiter Symphony*, 174, 182; *Magic Flute, The*, 41, 169; *Marriage of Figaro, The*, 169; *Minuets*, 28; *Requiem*, 173; *Rondo a la Turca*, 106, 120; *Symphony in E-flat*, 28, 182; *Symphony in G minor*, 28, 112, 182; *String Quartets*, 195; *Trios*, 204; *Violin Sonatas*, 213
- Negro Spirituals, 156, 185, 203
- Nevin, Ethelbert, 153; *Mighty lak' a Rose*, 153; *Rosary, The*, 153
- Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt* (Beethoven, Schubert, Tschaikowsky, Hugo Wolf), 140–1
- Oboe, 73, 79, 88–9, 203, 216
- Offenbach, Jacques, 167; *Tales of Hoffmann*, 167
- Opera, 6, 13, 98, 116, 135, 159–77, 191
- Oratorio, 6, 135, 159–77
- Orchestra, 10, 11, 12, 25, 77, 79, 80–1, 82–4, 191, 217
- Orchestral music, 6, 179–89
- Organ, 69, 75, 119, 174, 208
- Overture, 108, 187
- Paderewski, I. J., 28, 106; *Minuet*, 28
- Paganini, Niccolo, 107, 214; *Companella, La*, 214; *Caprices*, 214; *Violin Concertos*, 214; *Witches' Dance*, 214
- Paladilhe, Emile, 152; *Psyché*, 152
- Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi di, 175
- Parker, Horatio, 173; *Hora Novissima*, 173
- Payne, John Howard, 153; *Home, Sweet Home*, 52, 153
- Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista, 151; *Se tu m'ami*, 151
- Peter Gray, 157, 186
- Piano, 3, 7, 8, 13, 16, 69, 70–1, 86–7, 109, 180, 187–8, 203–6, 207–12, 217
- Piccolo, 50, 87–8, 92
- Pinsuti, Ciro, 61; *Good-night, Good-night, Beloved*, 61
- Pipe, 71, 89
- Pizzicato, 84–5, 89

- Poetic Meditations*, 126  
Polonaise, 29-30  
Polyphonic music, 51-5, 105, 173-7, 192, 207  
Ponchielli, Amilcare, 168; *Dance of the Hours*, 168; *La Gioconda*, 168  
Porter, Cole, 61, 136, 153; *Night and Day*, 61  
Poulenc, Francis, 212; *Piano Music*, 212  
Program music, 6, 115-33, 135, 159  
Prokofieff, Serge, 77, 131, 188, 211; *March (Love of Three Oranges)*, 211; *Peter and the Wolf*, 131; *Piano Concertos*, 211; *Violin Concerto*, 188  
Puccini, Giacomo, 83, 165; *Bohème, La*, 165; *Madam Butterfly*, 165; *Tosca*, 83, 165  
Purcell, Henry, 152-3, 193; *Golden Sonata*, 193  
Quartet, 10, 12, 78-82, 116, 191-2, 193-203, 217  
Quintet, 108, 206  
Rachmaninoff, Sergei, 130-1, 150, 186-7, 211; *In Silent Night*, 150; *Island of the Dead*, 130; *Lilacs*, 150; *Piano Concerto No. 2*, 187, 188, 211; *Symphony No. 2*, 186-7  
Rasumowsky, Count, 196, 198  
Ravel, Maurice, 27, 30-1, 60, 93, 129-30, 199-200, 211; *Bolero*, 27, 30-1, 130; *Mother Goose Suite*, 93, 130; *String Quartet*, 199  
Recapitulation, 99, 100, 105, 112  
Recitative, 21, 171  
Reger, Max, 150; *Mariae Wiegenlied*, 150  
Respighi, Ottorino, 77; *Pines of Rome*, 77  
Rhythm, 2, 10-11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20-1, 25, 27, 30-4, 35, 49, 65-6, 78, 95, 96, 111, 155  
Rimsky-Korsakoff, Nikolai, 43, 93, 130, 150, 167, 189; *Coq d'Or*, 167; *Flight of the Bumblebee*, *The*, 130; *Nightingale and the Rose*, *The*, 150; *Sadko*, 150; *Scheherazade*, 130, 189; *Song of India*, 43, 150; *Spanish Caprice*, 93  
Rodgers, Richard, 61; *Lover*, 61  
Romberg, Sigmund, 113, 181; *Blossom Time*, 113; *Song of Love*, 113, 181  
Rondo, 12, 105-6, 108  
Rose, David, 85; *Holiday for Strings*, 85  
Rossini, Gioacchino, 82, 168;

- Barber of Seville, The*, 168; *Stabat Mater*, 172; *William Tell (Overture)*, 82  
*Round*, 52-3, 174, 175  
*Rousseau, J. J.*, 38; *Lullaby*, 38  
*Rubinstein, Anton*, 150, 211; *Asra, Der*, 150; *Kammenoi-Ostrow*, 211; *Melody in F*, 211; *Piano Concertos*, 211  
*Saint-Saëns, Camille*, 43, 82, 83, 128-9, 132, 167, 171-2, 187, 188-9, 214, 215; *Algerian Suite*, 83; *Carnival of the Animals*, 128; *Concertos*, 188-9, 214; *Danse Macabre*, 128; *Havaneise*, 214; *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, 214; *My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice*, 43; *Reverie du Soir*, 83; *Samson and Delilah*, 43, 167, 171-2; *Swan, The (Le Cygne)*, 82, 129, 215  
*Santa Lucia*, 102, 151  
*Satie, Erik*, 212; *Piano Music*, 212  
*Saxophone*, 74, 216  
*Scale*, 12, 42-4, 51, 53, 108  
*Schiller, Friedrich*, 123, 184; *Ode to Joy*, 83, 123, 184  
*Schönberg, Arnold*, 173; *Gurrelieder*, 173; *String Quartet (Op. 7)*, 200-1  
*Schubert, Franz*, 25, 32, 108, 112-13, 123-4, 140, 143-5, 181, 184-5, 197, 204-5, 209, 210, 213; *Allmacht, Die (Omnipotence)*, 145; *An die Musik (To Music)*, 145; *Ave Maria*, 145; *Death and the Maiden*, 108, 145, 197; *Du bist die Ruh*, 145; *Erlking, The (Der Erlkönig)*, 144-5; *Forelle, Die (The Trout)*, 108, 145; *Hark, Hark, the Lark*, 145; *Heidenröslein*, 145; *Marche Militaire*, 25, 32, 124; *Moment Musical*, 124; *Rosamunde*, 124; *Schöne Müllerin, Die*, 145; *String Quartets*, 108, 197; *Symphony in C*, 184-5; *Trios*, 204-5; *Unfinished Symphony*, 112-3, 181, 184; *Wanderer, The*, 145; *Who Is Sylvia?*, 145; *Winterreise*, 145  
*Schuman, William*, 187  
*Schumann, Robert*, 113, 124, 143, 146, 147, 149, 185, 188, 197-8, 199, 205, 206, 209, 212, 213, 216; *Album for the Young*, 124; *Carnaval*, 124; *Cello Concerto*, 188; *Davidsbündler Dances*, 124; *Dichterliebe*,

- 146; *Du bist wie eine Blume*, 146; *Faust Overture*, 124; *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 146; *Genoveva Overture*, 124; *Happy Farmer, The*, 124; *Lotosblume, Die*, 146; *Manfred Overture*, 124; *March of the Davidsbündler*, 124; *Myrthen*, 146; *Nussbaum, Der*, 146; *Papillons*, 124; *Piano Concerto*, 188; *Quintet*, 206; *String Quartets*, 197–8; *Symphony No. 1 (Spring)*, 185; *Symphony No. 2 (C)*, 185; *Symphony No. 3 (Rhenish)*, 185; *Symphony No. 4*, 185; *Träumerei*, 124; *Trios*, 205; *Two Grenadiers, The*, 146; *Widmung (Dedication)*, 146
- Scott, Sir Walter, 145; *Lady of the Lake, The*, 145
- Scriabine, Alexander, 91, 187, 212; *Piano Music*, 212; *Prometheus Symphony*, 91
- Shakespeare, William, 145, 153, 166
- Shostakovitch, Dimitri, 187, 211; *Polka (The Golden Age)*, 211; *Symphonies*, 187
- Sibelius, Jean, 150, 187, 188; *Symphonies*, 187; *Violin Concerto*, 188
- Silcher, Friedrich, 101; *Lorelie, Die*, 101
- Sinding, Christian, 212; *Piano Music*, 212
- Smetana, Bedrich, 131, 202; *Moldau, The*, 131; *String Quartet (Aus meinem Leben)*, 202
- Sonata, 105, 106, 107, 108–9, 116, 119, 136
- Sonata Form, 104, 108, 201
- Song, 12, 97, 98, 108, 116, 135–58
- Soprano, 3, 66, 78, 79
- Sousa, John Philip, 25–6, 37, 88, 93; *Semper Fidelis*, 37; *Stars and Stripes Forever, The*, 25–6; *Washington Post*, 26
- Speaks, Oley, 153; *Road to Mandalay, The*, 153; *Sylvia*, 153
- Spoehr, Ludwig, 197, 205; *String Quartets*, 197; *Trios*, 205
- Star-spangled Banner, The*, 34, 37, 38, 49, 55, 139
- Strauss, Johann, 26, 37; *Beautiful Blue Danube, The*, 26, 37
- Strauss, Richard, 77, 90, 132–3, 143, 149, 170–1, 186; *Allerseelen (All Souls' Day)*, 149; *Also sprach Zarathustra*, 132; *Cäcilie*, 149; *Don Juan*, 90, 132;

- Don Quixote*, 77, 90, 132;  
*Du meines Herzens Krönelein*, 149; *Elektra*, 170-1;  
*Heldenleben*, *Ein*, 132-3;  
*Morgen (Tomorrow)*, 149;  
*Nacht, Die*, 149; *Rosenkavalier, Der*, 170; *Salome*, 170-1; *Serenade (Ständchen)*, 149; *Sinfonia Domestica*, 186; *Till Eulenspiegel*, 132; *Tod und Verklärung (Death and Transfiguration)*, 132; *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, 149; *Zueignung (Devotion)*, 149
- Stravinsky, Igor, 77, 131, 187; *Fire Bird, The*, 131; *Petrouschka*, 131
- Suites, 27, 28
- Sullivan, Sir Arthur (See also Gilbert and Sullivan), 153, 173; *Golden Legend, The*, 173; *Lost Chord, The*, 153; *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, 153
- Symphonic Poem (See Tone Poem), 108, 116, 131, 187
- Symphony, 6, 12, 18, 28, 97, 98, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 116, 136, 179, 189
- Technique, 3, 4, 93, 114, 136, 154-5, 201
- Tempo, 4, 20, 105
- Tenor, 3, 60, 66, 78
- Thibaud, Jacques, 215
- Thomas, Ambroise, 30, 167; *Gavotte*, 30; *Mignon*, 30, 167
- Thomson, James, 172; *Seasons, The*, 172
- Three Blind Mice*, 38, 52, 57
- Timbre (See Tone color)
- Time, 8, 9, 13-14, 19-34, 35, 81
- Tone color, 9, 12, 15, 17, 65-93, 95, 111, 155
- Tone Poem, 108, 116, 131, 187
- Trio, 106, 203-6
- Trombone, 72, 75, 80, 90-1
- Trumpet, 8, 9, 71, 72, 74, 80, 90
- Tschaikowsky, P. I., 42, 77, 85, 88, 89, 92, 113, 116-17, 130, 141, 150, 168, 181-2, 188, 201-2, 211, 213-14, 215; *Andante Cantabile*, 92, 201-2; *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*, 92; *Danse des Mirlitons*, 88; *Eugene Onegin*, 168; *Francesca da Rimini*, 130; *Humoresque*, 130; *None But the Lonely Heart (Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt)*, 141, 150; *Nutcracker Suite*, 88, 92, 130; *Piano Concerto*, 188, 211; *Pique Dame*, 168; *Romeo and*

- Juliet (Fantasy Overture)*, 130; *Sleeping Beauty, The*, 130; *String Quartets*, 92, 201–2; *Swan Lake (Ballet)*, 130; *Symphony No. 4*, 42, 85, 89, 90, 92, 116–17, 181; *Symphony No. 5*, 181; *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)*, 89, 130, 181; *Troika*, 130; *Variations on a Rococo Theme*, 215; *Violin Concerto*, 188, 213–14
- Tuba, 75, 80, 91
- Ukulele, 70, 82, 86
- Variations, 12, 105, 106–8
- Vaughan Williams, R., 187
- Verdi, Giuseppe, 26, 163, 165–6, 172, 179, 210; *Aïda*, 26, 163, 164, 165; *Ballo in Maschera, Un*, 166; *Celeste Aïda*, 163; *Falstaff*, 166; *Forza del Destino, La*, 166; *Otello*, 166; *Requiem*, 172; *Rigoletto*, 165; *Traviata, La*, 165; *Triumphal March*, 26, 163; *Trovatore, Il*, 165
- Viol family, 69, 70, 75
- Viola, 75, 79, 83, 203, 215–16
- Violin, 3, 8, 75, 76, 79, 82, 109, 187–8, 203–6, 212–15
- Voice, 8, 9, 12, 66, 67–8, 71, 76–7, 78
- Wagner, Cosina Liszt, 128
- Wagner, Richard, 32, 38, 77, 83, 88, 89, 90, 91, 116, 127–8, 135, 149–50, 164, 169–70, 176, 179, 185, 213, 230; *Dance of the Apprentices*, 164; *Faust Overture, A*, 116, 127; *Flying Dutchman, The (Overture)*, 127; *Good Friday Spell*, 128; *Götterdämmerung*, 91, 169; *Lohengrin*, 32, 38, 90, 127, 169; *Meistersinger, Die*, 38, 88, 127, 164, 169, 170; *Parsifal*, 91, 128; *Pilgrims' Chorus*, 91, 127; *Prize Song*, 127, 164, 213; *Rheingold, Das*, 169; *Rienzi (Overture)*, 127; *Ring of the Nibelung, The*, 169–70; *Siegfried*, 91, 169; *Siegfried Idyl*, 128; *Siegfried's Funeral March*, 91; *Siegfried's Rhine Journey*, 128; *Tannhäuser (Overture)*, 83, 127, 169; *Träume (Dreams)*, 149; *Tristan and Isolde*, 89, 127–8, 150, 169; *Walküre, Die*, 83, 169; *Wedding March*, 32
- Walton, William, 188; *Violin Concerto*, 188
- Waltz, 12, 20, 23, 25, 26, 81–2

- Weber, Carl Maria von, 79, 123, 169, 209; *Euryanthe* (*Overture*), 123, 169; *Freischütz*, *Der* (*Overture*), 79, 123, 169; *Invitation to the Dance*, 123, *Oberon* (*Overture*), 123, 169  
Whole Tone Scale, 60–1  
Wolf, Hugo, 141, 143, 148–9; *Gesang Weylas*, 149; *Verborgenheit*, 149; *Ver-* *lassene Mägdelein*, *Das*, 149  
Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno, 173; *Vita Nuova, La*, 173  
Xylophone, 70, 80, 87  
*Yankee Doodle*, 31, 38, 45, 47, 52, 186  
Zither, 70

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